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ABSTRACT

Selected conference papers address the following topics in the field of foreign language instruction: "The Use of Video as a Reading Tool in Spanish Intermediate Courses" (Julia Coll); "Oral Patterns and Written Composition" (Alan Farrell); "Using Reading to Promote Proficiency" (K. Eckhard Kuhn-Osius, Annette Kym); "The Application of Historical Linguistic Information to the Foreign Language Classroom" (Joel Rini); "What's in the Bag (and Why?): Tangibilia for the Classroom" (James M. Ogier); "Plus Ca Change: Minitel and Teletel, Electronic Marvels with Language Teaching Potential" (William J. Carney); "Use of Radio Plays and Video Tapes in Intermediate French and German Classes" (Anna Otten); "Diagnostic Testing: One Faculty's Experience" (Grover E. Marshall); "Public Speaking and International Career Development in the Foreign Language Business Course" (Susan M. Johnson); and "Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary for Proficiency" (Eileen W. Glisan). (MSE)

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Perspectives In Foreign Language Teaching

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PERSPECTIVES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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PERSPECTIVES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Proceedings of the 12th Annual Conference
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages & Literatures
Youngstown State University

Volume II

FOREWORD

The Twelfth Annual Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and Literatures, which was held at Youngstown State University on October 21 and 22, 1988, was sponsored by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, in conjunction with the Office of Continuing Education. In the last twelve years, this Conference has furnished a forum for the study of foreign language teaching, in which new ideas and developments have been examined by language specialists, teachers, and other participants with research interest in the field.

Of the forty-five presentations, ranging across the widest spectrum of language teaching topics, presented at the 12th Conference, ten papers have been selected to appear in this second volume of Perspectives in Foreign Language Teaching, which includes topics related to aspects of language proficiency, classroom language teaching techniques, electronic media and technology, foreign language education practices, and historical linguistics information.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the International Institute Foundation of Youngstown, for their grants, which allowed us to engage guest speakers for the 1988 Conference. We are very grateful to our chairperson, Dr. Allen Viehmeyer, and to all those colleages and friends, who, in different ways, have always contributed to the success of this Conference. We would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Lawrence Looby, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, for securing the grants for this Conference. In addition, we would like to thank the Office of Continuing Education, particularly Mrs. Barbara Ludwig, for invaluable assistance throughout the preparation of this annual event. Above all, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the contributing authors, and to all the participants in the workshops, lectures, and other presentations, for the openness, liveliness, very high standard of discussion, and encouragement, which have been of great influence for the success of this Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

We are very pleased to present this book of selected papers as the second volume of Perspectives in Foreign Language Teaching.

Servio Becerra
1988 Conference Co-Chairperson
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Youngstown State University

THE USE OF VIDEO AS A READING TOOL IN SPANISH INTERMEDIATE COURSES

Julia Coll, PhD
Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages
Shawnee State University

An innovative approach for students to assimilate reading assignments in intermediate level Spanish classes is through the use of video. The idea evolved out of two main concerns. The first is the difficulty that second year Spanish students experience when trying to understand plays, short stories and novels. Some of the students' complaints are that they spend a lot of time looking up words in the dictionary or that it is difficult to comprehend the text if they do not have a background with the subject.

During the last five years, there has been an increase in the production of videos on Spanish short stories written by Hispanic writers. These videos have proved to be very useful in providing a maningful context for reading. The short story used in this paper as an example is Los Inmigrantes, by Rómulo Gallegos.

A second concern is the common assumption among students that Hispanics are all the same. One way of sensitizing students about the characteristics that distinguish different Hispanic groups is by using TV commercials as a pre-reading activity of short articles.

As a result of the demographic increase of the Hispanic population in the United States, advertising agencies are trying to reach the Hispanic market. One way of accomplishing this is by producing TV commercials specifically directed to attract different Hispanic groups in the country. In relation to this workshop, a Budweiser commercial was used four times. Each time, a different geographic location was identified with a different Hispanic group. Since different Hispanic groups are shown, distinct forms of occupation, entertainment, socio economic status can be identified.

As Freire and Macedo (1987) stated, the pictures of concrete situations enable the students to reflect on their former interpretation of the world before going on to read the word. The instructor's role therefore, is that of a facilitator of comprehension when reading tasks are assigned. The students need to understand difficult lexical items, cultural referents in the text, and stereotypes. However, it is very difficult to explain to them the differences among these Hispanic groups by speaking about them only. A combination of media has been devised in which the students can look, listen, interpret and read with a purpose.

The main objective of this paper is to illustrate how video can be used to provide a background to reading materials in the foreign language class. The first part illustrates the use of TV commercials before reading short articles. The second demonstrates the use of a short story in video before reading it.

Methodology

Distribute the blank chart below in which the students have to fill in the spaces with words that identify what they see in each commercial during the silent viewing. This step helps focus students' attention on information they can infer from the visual input. A second viewing with the sound track takes place in order to compare their script readings with those in the commercials. A variety of this step is to play the audio with the video blacked out. After viewing each commercial two times, students are able to fill out their charts and are ready for discussion.

Television Commercial Treatment

1. Preview Questions

¿Dónde vive la mayoría de las personas que hablan español en los Estados Unidos?

¿De dónde son las personas que hablan español en los Estados Unidos?

¿Qué hacen los hispanos en los Estados Unidos?

¿Tienen mucho dinero los hispanos que viven en los Estados Unido?

2. Distribute the following chart. Tell the students to view the video to find words that describe the categories for each commercial in the chart.

Commercials

	1	2	3	4
Ocupación				
Diversión				
Clase Socio-Económica				
Dónde tiene lugar				
Posible Origen				

3. Silent View (Commercial 1)

The responses to the chart should answer the following questions after they view all the commercials.

¿Qué ocupación realizan las personas en el comercial?

¿Qué formas de diversión aparecen?

¿Qué clase socio-económica representan?

¿Dónde tiene lugar el comercial?

¿De qué origen puede que sean estos hispanos?

4. Distribute the commercial script (sample below). Ask a student to read the script orally. Clarify meaning of words.

Script

PARA USTED EN:
BUDWEISER
ES PARA USTED, POR ESE ESFUERZO QUE USTED PONE AL TRABAJAR.
ES PARA USTED, PORQUE USTED SABE CON SU GENTE DISFRUTAR.
POR ESO DE NUESTRA RICA TRADICION A LA SUYA VA ESE PURO Y REFRESCANTE SABOR QUE DICE BUDWEISER.
POR ESO BUDWEISER ES PARA USTED!

5. View the commercial with the soundtrack.

6. Read the script again.

Repeat the steps for each commercial.

7. Relation to real life.

Discussion questions:

¿Cómo están representados los hispanos en Estados Unidos?

¿Qué efectos emotivos trata de lograr este comercial?

¿Qué parece ser importante para los hispanos?

¿Qué grupo aparenta tener el status socio económico más alto? Por qué?

¿Que ocupaciones se enfatizan? Están representadas las ocupaciones profesionales? Por qué sí, no?

¿Como piensan ustedes que reaccionan algunos hispanos ante este comercial?

8. Reading. Lectura del Artículo: "Documental enfoca el futuro de millones de hispanos en Estados Unidos", El Nuevo Herald, sábado 21 de mayo de 1988. 3D

9. Encourage the students to predict what the article is about from reading the title. Write their predictions on the board to confirm them after they finish reading the article.

10. Ask them to read for the main idea of the article and for specific kinds of information related to the video. Discuss these points orally.

11. Ask them to write a reaction to the article. Include the main idea and some of the specific kinds of information that relate to the video.

Treatment for Short Stories. Los Inmigrantes

Play the first fifteen minutes of the video without sound and give the following instructions:

1. Visión Silenciosa

Vean la secuencia del video y traten de ubicar las respuestas para las siguientes preguntas. Luego intercambien sus respuestas con otro estudiante.

1. ¿Qué personas se encuentran en el parque?
2. ¿Se conocen esas personas?
3. ¿En qué viajan las personas?
4. ¿Cómo se sienten las personas en el autobús?
5. ¿Dónde están haciendo la fila?
6. ¿Qué hacen los dos hombres?
7. ¿Dónde viven los inmigrantes?
8. ¿Qué edad piensan ustedes que tienen los inmigrantes.

2. Eventos por orden de aparición.

Vean y escuchen la secuencia luego enumeren los eventos por orden de aparición.

1. ___ Llega la novia de Doménico.
2. ___ Los inmigrantes llegan a Venezuela.
3. ___ Los inmigrantes viajan en un autobus.
4. ___ Se encuentran dos viejos conocidos en un parque.
5. ___ Trabajan como vendedores de frutas y telas de puerta en puerta.

3. Hablemos de los personajes

En grupos de tres o cuatro respondan a las siguientes preguntas sobre los personajes del cuento. Den razones para sus respuestas.

1. ¿Quién parece pesimista?
2. ¿Quién parece optimista?
3. ¿Quién coquetea?
4. ¿Quién parece triste?
5. ¿Quién parece desilusionado?

4. ¿Qué vieron?

Coloquen un círculo en el número correspondiente al objeto que vieron en la secuencia.

1. El mar
2. Las frutas
3. Los niños
4. El barco
5. La armónica
6. La masa
7. La pensión
8. La panadería
9. Las telas
10. El puerto
11. El avión
12. El parque
13. El carro
14. La guitarra
15. El acordeón

5. Ordenen la conversacion

Usen las oraciones en el cuadro para formar un diálogo. Luego escuchen la secuencia del video para verificar las respuestas.

A. Ya todo está revisado, ya todo está arreglado, hasta flores encargué.
B. Musiú por qué no tocas el aparatico?
C. El que te pones en la boca pués.
D. Va bene, Josefina búsqueme la armónica per favore.
E. ¿Cuál aparatico?
F. Ah! la armónica. Claro, e perque no revisa tuto para el arribo de la mia Francesca.

EMPLEADA: ( )

DOMENICO: ( )

EMPLEADA: ( )

DOMENICO: ( )

EMPLEADA: ( )

DOMENICO: ( )

6. Ordenen la conversación

Escuchen la secuencia del video. Complete los espacios en blanco con las palabras que oiga que no aparecen en dichos espacios.

Muchacha 1 ¿A cómo tiene las (1) __________
Domenico barato barato
Muchacha 1 ¿Están baratas las frutas italiano?
Domenico Claro que están (2)______señorina
Muchacha 1 ¿Están (3)__________ ?
Domenico Claro frescas como (4)____señorina

Muchacha 2	Gracias
Muchacha 1	Dame una (5) ________
Domenico	lechocita el dinero eh!
Muchacha 1	ya va italiano ya te pago

7. Verdadero o Falso

Observen la escena entre el italiano y las muchachas. Decidan si las siguientes oraciones son verdaderas o falsas. Den razones para sus respuestas.

1. El italiano vende telas

2. La muchacha no quiere pagarle

3. El italiano vende por las calles

4. La niña le roba un mango al italiano

5. El italiano trata bien a la gente

8. Juego y Simulación (en pares]

Ensayen la siguiente situación y traten de simularla.

Tu novia/o viene de una ciudad lejos de la de donde tu vives, todos tus amigos hablan español y el/ella no. El/ella se siente aburrido/a y quiere marcharse. Tu le dices a tus amigos/as que lo/a entretengan.

9. Vocabulario

Analicen el uso de cada palabra o frase en la oración. Luego escojan el significado más apropiado en la columna a continuación.

1. Vamos a ser ricos
2. Si Dios quiere
3. He pensado montar una panadería
4. Para tener hijos mucha plata
5. Yo te aprecio

a. atormentarse
b. enamorarse
c. sabroso
d. tener mucho dinero
e. montar caballo
f. emprender negocio de hacer pan
g. te quiero
h. si yo puedo
i. El todopoderoso

Repeat or adapt the activities for the rest of the story.

Sources of prerecorded videos.

Short stories written by Venezuelan contemporary writers can be obtained in video (Beta format) by writing to: Museo Audio-visual, Parque Central, Caracas, Venezuela.

Pre-recorded videos available in the United States can be obtained by writing to: Tamarelle's International Films Ltd. 110 Cohasset Stage Road, Chico, California 95926. Telephone: (916) 895-3429

Sources for the video used in the workshop

Anheuser Bush, Inc Budweiser commercials

Rómulo Gallegos, **Los Inmigrantes**. Copy made by the Museo Audiovisual, Parque Central, Caracas, Venezuela.

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ORAL PATTERNS AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Alan Farrell, Ph.D.
Professor of French
Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia

Listen for a moment to these voices:

> All days make their end. By the way next when is it? Tuesday will be the longest day. Of all the glad new year, mother, the rum tum tiddely tum. Lawn Tennyson, gentleman poet. For the old hag with the yellow teeth... My teeth are very bad. Why, I wonder. Feel. That one is going, too. Ought I go to a dentist, I wonder, with that money? That one. Toothless, Kinch, the superman...My handkerchief. He threw it. Did I not take it up? His hand groped vainly in his pockets. No, I didn't. Better buy one. (Ulysses, 50)

That is of course a narrative string from Ulysses. Here are a couple other passages which would not, I think, get through Freshman Comp:

> They stayed in Bordeaux only the four days it took 'em to wait their turn to go up to the dock and unload but they drank wine and cognac all the time and the food was swell and nobody could do enough for them on account of America having come into the war and it was a great old four days.... (Nineteen-nineteen, passim)

John Dos Passos, Nineteen-nineteen. Here's Louis-Ferdinand Céline, another World War I veteran who couldn't seem to talk right afterwards:

> Rinnnnnnnng again!...telephone...this time I tell you I've had it! Molière pestered to death...Poquelin!...Poquelin! that little Intermezzo! how about it!...and the ballet!...Louis XIV is giving a banquet! Tonight! ...two thousand guests!...tonight, I'm saying! Molière pestered to death!...

> should have said: Go fuck yourself!... would have wound up pulling an oar in some galley, Poquelin! A teddy-bear, so he died on stage, spitting up his lungs, running out of blood and patience at the same time (Rigodon, 28)

This is Kurt Vonnegut, Slaughterhouse-five:

> The Germans and the dog were engaged in a military operation which had an amusingly self-explanatory name...the divinely listless love-play that follows the orgasm of victory. It is called 'mopping up.' The dog, who had sounded so ferocious, was a female German shepherd. She was shivering. Her tail was between her legs. She had been borrowed that morning from a farmer. She had never been to war before. She had no idea what game was being played. Her name was Princess. (52)

And finally, an author whose name you may not know so well, but whose voice, alas, you may recognize:

> Joe Williams characterizes the human nature element in all of us. There are two elements of human nature element Joe Williams characterizes. These elements are restlessness and avoidance measures. Restlessness and avoidance measures are instinctive reactions for Joe Williams. Joe Williams is plagued by tough breaks. These tough breaks compound his human nature problems. He is a passive man. He does not run his own life. His life runs him. His is constantly taking orders. Not giving them. All of us are victims sometime in life.

That was Joseph College, his Freshman essay on "Human Nature Elements and Problems in Joe Williams as Characterized by Author of the Book."

Now, the Twentieth Century has more or less legitimized the introduction of the patterns of live speech into written narrative. The problem is that with the freshness, spontaneity, immediacy retrieved by authentic **unguarded language** comes uninvited the chaos, the anarchy of **unguarded thought**, the torment, confusion, disarray of intrusion by the unconscious, by the persistence of memory, by the ranging of association, by the detour of sublimation, all regrettable and only-too-human tendencies upon which we would hope otherwise that reasoned, orderly discourse might set its stamp and stability. Naturally there is a culture behind this new literature, a glib, facile, parlous one. And rich enough, but not without its liabilities. If oral culture either has or uses no texts, then how, one critic asks,

> ...does it get together organized material for recall?...What does it or can it know in an organized fashion? Suppose a person in an oral culture would undertake to think and would finally manage to articulate a solution...How does he or she retain for later recall the verbalization so painstakingly elaborated? In the total absence of any writing, there is nothing outside the thinker, no text, to enable him or her to produce the same line of thought again or even to verify whether he or she has done so or not...How in fact could a lengthy analytic solution ever be asembled in the first place? (Ong, 33)

The problem is, of course, that our students, products of a talky, talking, talked-on, talked-over, talked-up, talked-out society are, alas, oral. Walter Ong, in a brief recapitulation of scholarship on the question of "orality," cites the following as elements of what he calls the "psychodymanic of orality": **additive rather than subordinative** (prefering correlatives to circumstantial conjunctions); **aggregative rather than analytic** (tending to epithets or formulas, clusters of words); **redundant or copious** (tending to derive its emphasis from repetition rather than studied effect); **traditional or conservative** (tending to dwell on themes, motifs, pearls of accumulated wisdom); **agonistically toned** (given to seeing things as black or white, adversarial) ;

empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced (given to feeling rather than judging by reason); **homeostatic** (dwelling in present) ; **situational** (disdaining abstractions or abstract dimensions). (37)

I will suggest that these are precisely the qualities which underlie my students' **written work,** ironically, and I will be go so far as to suggest that they are in your students' papers as well. I will suggest that, although we may not live in a "primary oral society," many of our students are **unable to distinguish between unguarded patterns and literate or expository ones,** and that to teach writing it is becoming increasingly necessary to **clarify and impose that distinction,** not merely for the purposes of encouraging **adult style,** but of bringing about **simple comprehension.** I would say further that the devices of logic, that is the post-oral or alphabetical "tool" for organizing thought, are being atrophied by the overpowering presence of pre-alphabetic mechanisms in students' minds and hence students' composition. Now I haven't time to speak much about logic, but I would suggest that reestablishing conventional grammar will have the salutary effect of redressing many confusions in reasoning as well.

Those of us who are in foreign languages have a problem compounded by current trends toward the teaching and testing (and curiously enough in the history of this business it is the testing which preceded the teaching) of **exclusively spoken language in the classroom,** "oral proficiency," and more and more of **culturally authentic oral patterns,** tending toward a genuine orality in this or that target language, gestures included. Well, fine. But how do we get from there to composition, to written accountability and the recrudescence that writing lends to unformed, spontaneous thought?

I think there is one principle which spoken language and written language share, which we as teachers may plausibly take as a point of departure, and which students must be taught to appreciate. The common element is this: **economy.** Now it is not the same economy, be it understood, but it is a process of paring away, casting off, and one students may more reasonably be expected to perform than genuine creation, at least in the beginning. The economy in oral communication, spoken language is **economy of effort, of vocabulary, of time**--not time speaking but time readying to speak--; the economy of written discourse is **economy of form, of space, of word and therefore of material**. But both written and spoken discourse reduce to a fundamental or nuclear component for coherent communication, a pattern which I would urge teachers to inculcate into their students and exploit as the irreducible core of grammar. It is an economy, I say, which turns on a minimal component of communication, which we may call the **nuclear sentence.**

responsibility **action** **victim/consequence**

We know that speaking tends to tolerate the stringing together of groups or even fragments of these. That writing is intolerant of fragments, prefers to maintain their integrity and bind or subordinate them to one another. But in the beginning teaching this structure means teaching **nouns and verbs.** And that is a good place to begin. Anything else is satellite: apposition, preposition, proposition, dependent, subordinate, secondary.

And think we can begin to make a transition from the one medium to the other. is sentence from a grade B novel in French. I deliberately choose a work o canon of "literature" because we would not expect to find such high-po tures, nor presumably such high powered abstractions of thought:

> ndus furieux par le traitement infligé à leur
> f, dont ils avaient apprécié la fermeté et le
> rage, exaspérés par le chapelet d'injures et de
> ps que les gardes faisaient pleuvoir sur eux,
> agés de devoir travailler comme des esclaves à
> ouvrage précieux à l'ennemi, désemparés d'être
> rés de leurs officiers et de ne pas entendre les
> mandements habituels, les soldats britanniques
> lisaient à montrer le moins d'entrain possible
> mieux encore, à commettre les bévues les plus
> sières, en feignant la bonne volonté. (Boulle,

Here's the for anyone who needs it:

> le furious by the treatment inflicted upon their
> ler, whose courage and firmness they had
> ired, exasperated by the hail of blows and
> lts which the guards rained down on them,
> aged to have to work like slaves at a project
> ortant to their enemy, confused to be separated
> n their own officers and no longer to hear the
> torary commands, the British soldiers
> ped in demonstrating the least enthusiasm
> sib or, better yet, in committing the most
> ctalar mistakes, allthewhile feigning good
> entis.

A long sentence and a nightmare for a second-year student. Let's look at it anyway. All I want you to do is **find the action** for me. Any action. All the action. All the verbs, conjugated or other. But only action verbs: auxiliaries, modals, facilitators don't count. I want the infinite form of each, no tenses, no moods, only the fundamental and basic action, in order if possible, though even that is not essential. My students routinely can come up with a list like this:

rendre	**make**
apprecier	**admire**
exaspérer	**exasperate**
pleuvoir	**rain down**
enrager	**enrage**
travailler	**work**
désemparer	**confuse**
séparer	**separate**
entendre	**hear**
rivaliser	**compete**
montrer	**demonstrate**
commettre	**commit**
feindre	**fake, feign**

Now we turn loose the students on a "travail de detective," the moral erand Oedipus, the primal man, was on, the search for responsibility. Who is responsible for each of these actions, who the victim, what the consequence? Sometimes that party or parties will not even be in the sentence, in which case the students will have to supply memory or common sense, after the fashion described by Professor Hirsch in his Cultural Literacy, though considerably less sophisticated for our purposes in an Intermediate French class. Here's a sample, though not the only one, of what they can usually come up with:

responsibility	action	victim/consequence
le traitement	rendre furieux	les soldats britanniques
les soldats britanniques	apprécier	la fermeté, le courage
les injures	exaspérer	les soldats britanniques
les coups	pleuvoir	sur les soldats britanniques
_____	enrager	les soldats britanniques
les soldats britanniques	travailler	à un ouvrage
_____	désemparer	les soldats britanniques
_____	séparer	les soldats britanniques
les soldats britanniques	nepas entendre	les commandements
les soldats britanniques	rivaliser	
les soldats britanniques	commettre	les bévues
les soldats britanniques	feindre	la bonne volonté

Now the **underlying structure** of the larger sentence is exposed. And the first thing that emerges is a true picture of just what was contained in that sentence and just what work, **economy**, is at root of composing or abridging the chain of thoughts which inspired it into a legitimate written form. We will speak of this process later. For now, all we have to do to make sentences, utterances is to conjugate the verbs, that is bond responsibility and action. There are some problems, though, let's admit.

The students did not plausibly come up with subjects for the verbs enrager, désemparer, séparer. This inheres partially in the nature of the past participle and the implied passive construction here. It belongs to a special relationship which exists between subject and object, a relation marked by the active, the passive, the causative, the reflexive. I recommend that you keep everything active and present for now. Remember that **homeostasis** is a characteristic of the oral mentality! What sort of word ultimately provokes the action represented by enrager, désemparer, séparer? In the sentence, we can find traitement, which is apparently the umbrella term for all this. Don't like that. Well, then who provokes the action, since it is best of all to assign responsibility to people in this synthetic world we are making up here? Of course it is les gardes, le colonel Saïto, les Japonais or something like that, from in or out of the passage.

This passage, depending how your conscience lets you break it up, shows twelve nuclear utterances within. Of those, five show irregular verbs, seven regular. Not bad odds, especially allowing that your sutdents, or mine the next time I try it, may not get all twelve. And there are others. I didn't go after infliger, for instance, which I thought too deeply imbedded, though some students do spot it. It would give us: ______ **infliger le traitement.** Question: who or what provokes this action? Again, the answer lies variously inside or outside the passage: les gardes, le colonel Saïto, les Japonais . The drill in class is to elicit the verbs, maybe keep track on the board depending on how ferocious a passage you attack, then elicit by small bites the **responsible parties and victims or consequences** from within or without the text itself. Throw everything else away. Yeah, yeah. I know. For now, though: broad strokes. Principle at stake. Exceptions negligible. The business of this hunting down responsibility is both a moral and a grammatical exercise, and brings up all sorts of provocative questions to be dealt with in embryonic, macaronic, or actual French or even English if it's important enough. If the guards infliger the traitement, for instance, but on ordres du colonel Saïto, then who is ultimately responsible? And on and on.

You know what structures will get them into trouble. Steer around them. Modify them. If you must, take the time to explain them as they nest with your grammar review or syllabus. My idea of grammatical review is to feed them only the elements of syntax they really need to crack these little puzzles and in order of need, so that in my grammar the past and future, the passive come last; adjectives never. Only the grammar of nouns and verbs--definite, indefinite, interogative, negative--detains us. I find that with a short, perhaps painful, bit of conditioning--without using any heavy duty grammar, either--my students, mostly in the 450-550 verbal range, can usually crack a sentence like this up to 80%, which I call good at that level. And I add that these short sentences are speakable, recallable in class and usable for oral drill, as I hope to show later.

At first, I try to guide the students to the essential ideas of a page or passage by questions. Later, when they get good at that, I take away the questions and let them determine for themselves which words are important on a given page, which ideas seem to tell the most about a given condition or situation in the narrative. What we will have to assume, because we will never have time enough to analyse every sentence in this or any book we read, is that essentially in any good work of literary art--and you will hear this again--the relation of the part to the whole will be visible in the part. This assertion, if it is true, would authorize us to study one page carefully to discern the theme of the ten pages which surround it. We test the premise in the weeks to follow. For our purposes,though, about half-way through the semester, students no longer answer specific questions. They will write daily ***résumés*** that is, summaries of reading assignments. They will do these summaries just as they do their reading and just as they did their questions: **analysis of structure and form**.

As they read a given page, they notice and jot down words they find essential to that page. I limit them to ten; that will hone their sense for judgment and discrimination and **economy**. I do not allow vague or general words. They won't summarize the specific action or tell us anything. Students must always choose the most concrete words they can find; that's the cutting edge of action. Consider these words from the first pages of the above text, Le Pont de la rivière Kwaï:

respecter

la discipline

ordre

capitulation

le Haut Commandement

combattre

une évasion

Nicholson

de jeunes officiers

Now, all we have to do is find verbs for the nouns and nouns for the verbs, some of which may already be on the list. We may make five sentences of these ten words or ten; mostly what we want to do is cover all the situations suggested by these words and what we understood or think we understood of the text. Any old order for now. Let's try a few:

Le Haut commandement donne **l'ordre.**

C'est **l'ordre** de **capitulation.**

Nicholson respecte l'ordre.

Nicholson respecte la discipline.

Nicholson accepte **l'ordre.**

Nicholson accepte **la capitulation.**

De jeunes officiers n'acceptent pas **l'ordre.**

De jeunes officiers n'acceptent pas **la capitulation.**

De jeunes officiers proposent **une évasion.**

Nicholson combat l'évasion.

That's all I want for a while. We collect these things, scrutinize the basic grammar and get the conjugations right, watch direct or indirect objects, discourage copying from text and long answers. That's plenty for a few weeks, even a semester. **Then we make the transition.** What we have now is the core or nucleus of a paragraph. All we really have to do is eliminate any repetitions we have created, see about arranging our little sentences in some order (any order will do, pehaps the best one being the order they appeared in as we read), and then filling in any gaps in the sequence or sense of what is left.

> **Le Haut Commandement donne l'ordre de capitulation. Nicholson respecte la discipline. Il respecte cet ordre. De jeunes officiers n'acceptent pas cet ordre. Ils proposent une évasion. Nicholson combat cette évasion. Il respecte les ordres.**

To make these seemingly independent sentences coalesce or fuse into a paragraph, all we have to supply is the set of **relation-words** which make **obvious** to a reader the connections which are already **implicit** in the sentences themselves.

> **Le Haut Commandement donne l'ordre de capitulation. *Puisque* Nicholson respecte la discipline, il respecte cet ordre. De jeunes officiers n'acceptent pas *pourtant* cet ordre. Ils proposent une évasion, *mais* Nicholson combat cette évasion. Il respecte *trop* les "instructions reçues."**

Notice which words set up and set off the relationship between sentences. Puisque explains why a soldier like Nicholson would surrender, not of his own free will, but on orders, which he respects above all. This respect puts him in a curious position, *pourtant*, that is, however, since he will have to oppose a porposed escape by his junior officers to maintain his respect for the letter of the law, to surrender and not resist or evade. The last word we added was clearly a personal word, a judgment: we think Nicholson was wrong to hold to the letter of the law and to forbid his junior officers to escape. We suspect, furthermore, that Nicholson's narrow interpretation of rules and orders is going to lead to trouble later on. We think, in short, that Nicholson holds too much respect, *trop*, for authority, and we have underlined it with a phrase from the text, a phrase Nicholson himself is probably fond of, "*les instructions reçues.*"

Now, we have already learned how to extract the core or **pivotal action** from a passage, that is, the four or five crucial **verbs**, for which we identify **subjects**, and to which we seek **consequences**. For the first act of *Becket*, we might have chosen these verbs or other specific actions like them:

responsible party	**action**	**victim or consequence**
Tout propriétaire	**devoir**	**une taxe ou un soldat**
Un laic	**devoir**	**la taxe**
Un clerc	**assister**	**dans ses prières**
Le roi	**attendre**	**sa taxe**
l'Eglise	**refuser**	**cette taxe**
la question		**être**
un principe		
la question		**être**
"qui gouverne?"		

We can make simple enough sentences from these, for instance:

Tout propriétaire doit une taxe ou un soldat.
Un laic doit la taxe.
Un clerc doit assister dans ses prières.
Le roi attend sa taxe.
L'Eglise refuse cette taxe.

La question est de principe.

La question est "qui gouverne?"

Now, if we simply string those simple sentences together and indent the first, we come on something vaguely **resembling a paragraph**, though not yet actually a paragraph:

> **Tout propriétaire doit une taxe ou un soldat. Un laic doit la taxe. Un clerc doit assister dans ses prières. Le roi attend sa taxe. L'Eglise refuse cette taxe. La question est de principe. La question est "qui gouverne?"**

Our question is: have we arranged these sentences in their best and most easily-followed **order**? Then: What is the unifying **theme or thesis** of these sentences? Finally: what **conclusion** is to be drawn from this string of sentences. We might prefer this order, for instance, as clearer:

> **Tout propriétaire doit une taxe ou un soldat. Le roi attend sa taxe. L'Eglise refuse cette taxe. Un laic doit la taxe. Un clerc doit assister dans ses prières. La question est de principe. La question est "qui gouverne?"**

We might propose this as a topic or theme:

> **Le conseil d'Evêques se dispute avec le roi Henri Plantagenêt. Tout propriétaire doit une taxe ou un soldat. Le roi attend sa taxe. L'Eglise refuse cette taxe. Un laic doit la taxe. Un clerc doit assister dans ses prières. La question est de principe. La question est "qui gouverne?"**

Remember that in good writing the **relation of the part to the whole**, the topic, is visible in some form in each of the parts. Perhaps a word or two here and there coulld spell out more clearly who took what position in this dispute and why:

> **Le conseil d'Evêques se dispute avec le roi Henri Plantagenêt. Selon les coutumes, tout propriétaire doit payer une taxe ou fournir un soldat armé. Le roi attend sa taxe de l'Eglise. L'Eglise refuse de payer cette taxe. L'Archevêque insiste qu'un laic doit payer la taxe. Il déclare qu'un clerc doit assister dans ses prières seulement. Pour l'Eglise la question est de principe. Pour le roi la question est "qui gouverne en Angleterre?"**

Looking at our expanded paragraph, it is clear where the focus is: the King wants his money, but the Church won't pay it. We should bring that idea up front if we can.

> **Le conseil d'Evêques se dispute avec le roi Henri Plantagenêt. *Le roi attend sa taxe de l'Eglise, mais L'Eglise refuse de payer cette taxe.* Selon les coutumes, tout propriétaire doit payer une taxe ou fournir un soldat armé. L'Archevêque insiste qu'un laic doit payer la taxe. Il déclare qu'un clerc doit assister dans ses prières seulement. Pour l'Eglise la question est de principe. Pour le roi la question est "qui gouverne en Angleterre?"**

We still need some **evidence** from the text, the real words of the actors, which will anchor our assertions in the only reality we have, namely that of our source, *Becket*. The trick is to quote often, but briefly; to choose exactly the key words and no more; to **support** your claims but **not merely repeat** them; to single out those words spoken frequently in the source--they must be significant--and those things said one and for all, in a particular way and never better. **Briefly but often.**

> **Le conseil d'Evêques se dispute avec le roi Henri Plantagenêt sur 'la taxe dabsence." *Le roi attend sa taxe de l'Eglise, mais L'Eglise refuse de payer cette taxe.* Selon "nos coutumes," explique le roi, tout propriétaire doit payer une taxe ou**

> **fournir un soldat "l'écu au bras.". L'Archevêque insiste qu'un laic doit payer la taxe. Il déclare qu'un clerc doit assister dans ses prières seulement. Le roi appelle ces réponses "des arguties." "Alors payez!" crie-t-il? Pour l'Eglise la question est de principe. Pour le roi la question est "qui gouverne en Angleterre?"**

Finally, what can we conclude about this entire struggle? The student is entitled to make a **personal judgment**. The trick is to make that judgment the reader's judgment as well. Here is one possible conclusion to a pretty good paragraph:

> **Le conseil d'Evêques se dispute avec le roi Henri Plantagenêt sur 'la taxe dabsence."** ***Le roi attend sa taxe de l'Eglise, mais L'Eglise refuse de payer cette taxe.*** **Selon "nos coutumes," explique le roi, tout propriétaire doit payer une taxe ou fournir un soldat "l'écu au bras.". L'Archevêque insiste qu'un laic doit payer la taxe. Il déclare qu'un clerc doit assister dans ses prières seulement. Le roi appelle ces réponses "des arguties." "Alors payez!" crie-t-il? Pour l'Eglise la question est de principe. Mais, pour le roi la question est "qui gouverne en Angleterre?" Donc, puisqu'on ne pose pas la vraie question, on ne va pas trouver la vraie solution.**

Notice the *mais* that returned at the end to reprise the initial statement of topic or theme? That simple conjunction **binds** the thesis and yet **separates** it. That tension between two competing yet compatible notions is what gives writing a living force. **Paradox holds attention.** In the same sentence we have both topic and division. The remaining sentences deal with one side or the other of the quarrel: **will pay, will not.**

Good writing? Wellllllllllllllllllllllll... Acceptable writing. A good beginning. A dependable and consistent core upon which to squander a bit of wit and some polish. No past tenses. No subjunctives. No pronouns, even. Yet the thought is clear, complete, and consistent with the text, documented by the text. It is also true that writing is less adding than **subtracting**. It seems to me in general that students are better off **writing a lot**

and cutting, pruning, editing than **writing a little and then inflating.** Suit yourself, though. But if the student builds up a good core of thought, he or she just has to be alert for the things which spoil or pollute clarity. And most of us can at least tell what to **get rid of,** even if we can't tell how to **produce** what we are after.

Now, I have found conversations in standard, year-long texts insufficiently active and not readily susceptible of action-directed animation. Perhaps my weakness. In any event I also found the exercises, though sound and pedagogically appropriate, disjointed or *décousu;* that is, the students found the leap from one to the next, shifts in vocabulary and context, difficult. The isolation of a single teaching point seems to be hampered by a too-broad vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary, a subject for which I have no particular feeling or aptitude, would appear to be yet another qustion; all I can ascertain is that the disparate nature of the training utterances seemed to interfere with the exercises. Furthermore, the exercises were artificial, in the sense that they were not spontaneous or not spontaneously-generated by the students themselves. And I think they can be.

Anyhow, this is what I have tried out and pursued as a sort of "theme" , with more or less success. My impression is furthermore that they were successful at manipulating such exercises, which is also encouraging. My impression is that, finally, they learned no less and no less well than they would have by text-generated or text-spawned drills: remains to be seen or verified independently.

Sooooooooooooooooo...

This is what we do. We say, "OK. Aujourd'hui on va au cinoche. Au cinéma joue film suivant:"

Le Train sifflera 3 foi

La Guerre des étoiles

Casablanca

Le Faucon maltais

Le Sorcier d'Oz

With a mixed class, we pretty much have to pick flicks with recognizable or at least explicable titles in French and those that are likely subjects for general viewing; a class with a more definite or particular identity might be amused by a specific kind or period of film. We try to isolate some primitive vocabulary but as little as possible and not too complicated. The goal is **not** vocabulary in this drill, though a little **is** required. The trick is to make a few pieces of "furniture" do the job by encouraging students to use imagination and circumlocution to get at the core of the tale. Imaginatively. Spontaneously. Orally. Here, for instance, is what we came up with for Le Sorcier d'Oz. Notice that we are mostly interested in nouns and verbs for basic oral utterance at Novice or Intermediate level. We can extort satellites like adjectives and adverbs, adjectivals and adverbials out of them during the exercise, *au vol*. *So,* Le Sorcier d'Oz:

l'épouvantail
le cyclone
la ferme
les pompes (vermeil)
Toto
Dorothée
le sorcier
le lion timide

chanter
marcher
avoir peur
transporter
attaquer
transformer
donner
pleurer

l'arbre parlant
la fleur magique
le bucheron (en étain)
le chemin en briques (pavés) d'or
un manche á balai

menacer
avoir sommeil
avoir envie
suivre
se trouver
s'évanouir

More or less. A small list will lead to student suggestions, seems to me. At least that was the way it worked in practice. The fact of the *bucheron'* 's, the *lion* 's, the *épouvantail* 's dilemma led, for instance, to suggestions of the things they lacked, therefore sought from Oz: *un coeur, une cervelle, du courage.* The word *sorcier* suggested untimately *sorcière.* Most of the verbs are from the simpel conjugatio, mostly cognate; a few judicious suggestions, however, can steer this business in any direction. A few pantomimed actions by prof can extort from students most of a core vocabulary needed to get the drill cooking. Keep it simple, keep it fast-paced, keep it rolling. First we cull a few basic utterances about the acation in the film. For instance:

Un cyclone transporte la ferme.
Dorothée a peur de la sorcière.
La sorcière a envie des pompes.
L'épouvantail a envie d'une cervelle.
Le lion timide a besoin de courage.
Le bucheron a envie d'un coeur.

Dorothée a sommeil.

Le lion timide a peur de Toto.

La sorciére attaque Toto.

And on and on. First drill.

Now we can try to squeeze satellites out of them. Ask them to elaborate. Ask leading questions. Pantomime:

Dorothée a sommeil ***parmi les fleurs magiques.***

Le cyclone transporte la ferme ***du Kansas en Oz.***

L'épouvantail a besoin d'une cervelle ***pour penser.***

La sorcière attaque Toto ***de son manche à balai.***

And on and on. Mostly we settle for phrases rather than clauses, prepositions rather than conjunctions, noun-based amplifications rather than verbal. Each sentence a student generates, however, much be accompanied by the appropriate or even the inappropriate gestures, actions, movements. (Rassias Principle Number Four) No speech without movement allowed. We spin for the cylone, we ride the manche à balai, we hang out our arms limp for the épouvantail, and so on. Second drill.

Now we grab the first five students, yank them up front, and put them into a rough line. Goal: to manipulate these basic utterances in and out of fundmental patterns of the language, according to the structures students will have studied thus far in course. Certainly transformation to interrogative and negative, pronoun object integration, alteration to past compound, imperfect, and future. Later, as we shall see, we can begin combing simple sentences for the conditional and subjunctive or for circumstantial clauses ad lib. For now: simple. We want students to discover for themselves that speech is a living and palpable thing, responsive, malleable, tangible, infrangible, susceptible of manipulation. Here is an example:

student #1: Un cyclone transporte la ferme au Kansas.

student #2: Un cyclone l'y transporte.

student #3: Un cyclone l'y a transportée.

student #4: Un cyclone ne l'y a pas transportée.

Or:

student #4: Un cyclone l'y a-t-il transportée?

student #5: Un cyclone ne l'y a-t-il pas transportée?

Or:

student #5: Un cyclone l'y transportera.

Or:

student #5: Un cyclone l'y transportait.

I'd say no more than five, which makes for relais, teams perhaps, for competition or at least some relief for those who perform. Two or three sentences per group, then back to seats and another up front. They must pantomine action, something like the **Rassais**

wave formation, upon which -- naturally -- this exercise is patterned. Keep it simple. Keep it fast. Try to detour or derail over-complex or just-won't -work formations, although I'd say to permit the odd or uncomfortable sentence that comes up through the luck of the draw just to maintain the illusion of order in the language. Don't get wrapped around the axle over obscure exceptions or fine detail for the moment, at least in any level for which this sort of drill is apt. My opinion, any way. Their own sentences . They manipulate. Let them have the small dignity of thinking, for the nonce anyway, that it's smooth. Time to pull back later.

Other structural possibilities within the rubric of "simple sentence": active-to-passive tranformations; amplification by causative or indefinite use of reflexive:

student #1: Un cyclone transporte la ferme au Kansas.
student #2: La ferme est transportée par le cyclone au Kansas.

Or...

student #1: On entend le cyclone à la ferme.
student #2: Le cyclone s'entend à la ferme.
student #3: Le cyclone est entendu à la ferme.
Or...

student #1: La sorcière capture Dorothée.

student #2: La sorcière fait capturer Dorothée.

student #3: La sorcière fait capturer Dorothée par les gardes.

student #4: Dorothée est capturée par les gardes.

student #5: Les gardes capturent Dorothée.

I suppose if one were clever enough, a single sentence could be made to suffice for all these. So far I am only at Consicouness Level I just now, and can't quite come up with them.

If that works smoothly enough, and the class is sophisticated enough, try this. We rig up a couple of columns with slippery, generally applicable fragments, that is, simple sentences which we can combine plausibly--key word here "plausibly," because out of the nature of this drill we shall have to be a little tolerant of the combinations--into conditional sentences with si.. Like this:

voir	un arbre parlant	avoir peur
	l'épouvantail	avoir sommeil
	le cyclone	s'écrier
		s'évanouir
saisir	Toto	attaquer
	le manche à balai	voler
	les pompes	être perdu(e)

Without exhausting the list of simple harmlessly ambiguous fragments, we can simply identify persons, then point to a sentence from one column and then to another column, perhaps with a different personage from the movie, and how "Siiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii..." The sentences should come out something like this, perhaps better if the components are more cleverly designed:

Si la sorcière saisissait Toto, Dorothée attaquerait.
Si La sorcière saisissait son manche à balai, elle volerait.
Si Dorothée voyait un arbre parlant, elle s'évanouirait.
Si Dorothée voyait le cyclone, elle s'écrirait.
Si la sorcière saisissait les pompes, Dorothée serait perdue.

If you're reaaaaaaaaaaaally hardcore, you could drop these poisonous things into the negative through the same sort of drill. Plausible, short, auto-generated utterances, largely oral, largely exploiting minimal but specific vocabulary.

OK, let's go one further and try the same drill with the subjunctive. Same game. Two columns. Sentences suggested by student banter about the flick, judiciously nudged into a useful form by miming, swarming, coaxing, cajoling prof. I would say that some classes--and some profs--could handle this all orally, without resort or recourse to the board. Individual determination and--my view--the ideal. One could start with the board and then graduate to freehand, bareback, sentence-mixing. Limitless. But always the specter of structure and always the minimal core of the simple sentence (subject-conjugated verb-perhaps object) subjacent, lurking, ready to pounce.

douter
avoid peur/craindre
être nécessaire/falloir
être juste, bon, naturel, curieux
vouloir, prérérer, désirer, aimer
content, triste, surpris, honteux

QUE

refuser un coeur à
saisir son manche à balai
ne pas avoir de coeur
vouloir du courage
donner une cervelle à être
parler

The teacher points, identifies potential subjects, leaves as much as possible of the sentences to be designed, devined by the students, imposed as it were not by grammar or the class-room structure, but by the general logic of the story, the film:

Dorothée doute QUE le sorcier refuse un coeur au bucheron.
Il est curieux QU' un lion veuille du courage.
Il n'est pas juste QUE le bucheron n'ait pas de coeur.
Dorothée a peur QUE la sorcière (ne) saisisse son manche à balai.

My advice: forget that pléonaste in the last one. Suit yourself.

One last possible drill. Same exercise but exploiting the conjunctions governing the subjunctive in French:

pleurer
demander un coeur
crier
avoir du courage
claquer des talons

rendre Toto
entendre
s'évanouir
saisir son manche à balai
rentrer au Kansas

Notice that there are really two games possible here. If the prof chooses the same subject for each action (one from either column), then the student responds with the economical infinite form; if the prof names two different subjects, then we must conjugate, and having conjugated use a conjunction, and having chosen one of the below in French, conjugate in the subjunctive.

afin que
de sorte que
de peur que
avant que
jusqu'à ce que
sans que
quoique
pourvu que

pour que
de maniere que
de crainte que
en attendant que

à moins que
bien que
à condition que

Sooooooooooooooooooooo...

Le lion a du courage*jusqu'à ce que* la sorcière saisisse son manche à balai.

Dorothée crie *avant que* le lion (ne) s'évanouisse.

Le bucheron demande un coeur *sans que* le sorcier entende.

Dorothée pleure *sans que* la sorcière rende Toto.

And...

Dorothée pleure *sans* rentrer au Kansas.

Le lion a du courage *sans* s'évanouir.

Dorothée claque des talons *pour* rentrer au Kansas.

Seems like a simple exercise, capable of "contextualizing" drills by calling up a commonplace of some frequency even among disparate social groups or levels in a given section. It seems to offer a physical, action-oriented component, great flexibility, the capacity to accelerate in level along with the class, and the potential to exact some modest application of imagination from most students along with a sufficient degree of professor input and control to allow the latter some pleasure in the exercise as well.

So, let's get back to that student paragraph that I offered as introduction. Remember:

> **Joe Williams characterizes the human nature element in all of us. There are two elements of human nature element Joe Williams characterizes. These elements are restlessness and avoidance measures. Restlessness and avoidance measures**

> are instinctive reactions for Joe Williams. Joe Williams is plagued by tough breaks. These tough breaks compound his human nature problems. He is a passive man. He does not run his own life. His life runs him. His is constantly taking orders. Not giving them. All of us are victims sometime in life.

How do we fix it? Well, first off it is essential that it be the students who "fix" it. What we have to do is mostly negative, according to the doctrine I have tried to peddle today. We must deny him his "oral" devices, and that means requiring the correlating or subordinating of any sentence with a repeated element in it by one of four "expository" devices: relative, correlative, circumstantial, infinite or non-conjugated verb. Then we must attack word clustering and formulas. That means something like this:

responsible	action	victim/consequence
Joe Williams	characterizes	human nature element
Joe Williams	characterizes	elements
Elements	are	restlessness
		avoidance measures
Restlessness	are	instinctive reactions
Avoidance measures		
Tough breaks	plaque	Joe Williams
Tough breaks	compound	human nature problems
Joe Williams	is	passive
Joe Williams	does not run	own life
His life	runs	Joe Williams

Joe Williams	**takes**	**orders**
Joe Williams	**does not give**	**orders**
All of us	**are**	**victims**

As you can see, our expansion is not substantially different from the student's, which suggests that his paragraph was in the wrong form for written discourse. Our expansion also revealed what was hidden by a fragment and by at least one passive. Now, before we try to combine these for **economy**, let's get the gibberish out. What is hiding behind those collocations? We simply refuse them and make the student come up with a word, a single word, that he or she meant. The results can be surprising. Here's what this student decided upon after my simple refusal to let him use evasive terms like "human nature element" or "avoidance measure":

responsible	**action**	**victim/consequence**
Joe Williams	**characterizes**	**weaknesses**
Joe Williams	**characterizes**	**kinds**
Kinds	**are**	**restlessness** **fear**
Restlessness **Fear**	**are**	**instinctive**
Tough breaks	**plague**	**Joe Williams**
Tough breaks	**compound**	**weaknesses**
Joe Williams	**is**	**passive**

Joe Williams	**does not run**	**own life**
His life	**runs**	**Joe Williams**
Joe Williams	**takes**	**orders**
Joe Williams	**does not give**	**orders**
All of us	**are**	**victims**

Now, I still have a couple of questions, but that is what the student came up with. Let's ask him to combine these sentences, distill the repetitions, perhaps even do away with what does not add or amplify:

> **Joe Williams characterizes two kinds of human weakness, fear and restlessness. Tough breaks plague Joe Williams and compound his instinctive weaknesses. Because Joe Williams is passive, he does not run his own life; life runs Joe Williams. He takes orders but does not give orders. All of us are victims.**

Now if we look closely at the forms, we see that the writer has left instinctive and passive, which actually seem to stand in some relation; they both describe Joe's state. Sooooooooo...if a = b and b = c, then a = c. Instinctive must be passive for our purposes here, and they in turn must be opposed to something that Joe is not. When pressed, this student came up with active quickly enough for the opposite value to passive, but he could not do the same for instinctive. Turned loose on the problem, a whole class offered up animal for instinctive, and human first as an opposite to animal. Then, seeing they were in trouble when their second sentence was compared to their first, they agreed that human, now a synonym to animal, was in fact what was wrong with Joe, human weakness.

opposed to some other sort of strength: _____ strength. What Joe lacked. What he ran from. What he would have had if he stayed. What would have made him stay. Well, of course, after a lot of agony, someone proposed responsibility and the whole thing fell clear. He needed moral strength to resist natural weakness and as a result would assume responsibility and stay, not run.

> **Joe Williams characterizes two kinds of human weakness, fear of responsibility and restlessness. Tough breaks plague Joe Williams and compound his instinctive weaknesses. Because Joe Williams is passive, he does not run his own life; life runs Joe Williams. He takes orders but does not take responsibility. All of us are victims.**

When the new ideas were introduced, it became clear that the take-give antinomy of the next-to-last sentence was not right, but that a take-take paradox would make more sense, and from that the nifty irony that taking orders was a passive response while taking responsibility was active. And that leaves us with the original conclusion, that all of us are victims. I say that it is now either incomplete or inconsistent with what we have deciphered about Joe's life. Here's what the kids came up with as a personal judgment, to be developed in what follows, of course: "All of us can be victims like Joe, unless we learn to take responsibility for our lives."

Well, is that then a good paragraph? I know it is a better paragraph. I for one still have questions about tough breaks and about fear. What tough breaks? Fear of what? But what has emerged here is, I say, a lot clearer than what was there first. Best of all it gets corrected by the student by the mostly private application of some mostly simple measures and a bit of professorial sternness, namely the refusal to accept certain favorite word-dodges by which students conceal a lack of thought.

Any one of you who have assigned a composition topic and retrieved from eleven out of twelve students this sentence: "Gerty Mac Dowell and Nausicaa are very similar in their thoughts and actions but also very different" should harbor the suspicion that our students are given to **formulaic** composition. Any of you who have waded through a Freshman essay inserting periods, conjunctions, colons, and semicolons knows that **parataxis** is a thriving medium nowadays. Any of you who have gnashed your teeth at clichés, bromides, platitudes, and other lieux communs will be persuaded that **thematic thought** and **composition by motif** remain traditional technique. So what do we do? Well, perhaps this. Students, who live clearly enough in a parlous, spoken culture among themselves, mistrust and recoil from writing, from reading as a related skill. I prefer to legitimize initial efforts by drawing them out of reading from some of the authors I have mentioned. We can introduce into students' reading, first off, familiar patterns not so far divorced from what they speak and hear. We can begin reasonably enough with pastiches of these spoken patterns, first to leave them the joy of unfettered composition on paper, though not without some communion with an artist in this medium, someone who used such speech with a purpose. The pastiche is a respectable teaching tool in Europe, a traditional one, and, I say, a useful one for our purposes; even the lowly dictée seems to me legitimate for this purpose, though with obvious limitations.

We can slowly and systematically attack what is most dangerous about unguarded speech, its failure to order itself. This we do by exploiting what conversation and composition have in common: **economy.** If we begin with what students are thinking and--most important--how they are thinking, and arm them in class with devices, procedures for testing that sort of thought, I think they can do better at seeing with genuine clarity **what is going on around them** and do better at generating ideas, bright and valid ideas, for **changing what is going on around them when it should not be**. At the least we can show them how to sift and sort out what patterns are those of spontaneous language and what ones formulas which deserve inspecting and perhaps discarding.

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USING READING TO PROMOTE PROFICIENCY

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While everybody talks about the 'Proficiency Movement,' numerous misunderstandings about it necessitate reflection on the question what Proficiency based teaching could mean. The other day we talked to a colleague in Russian who said they couldn't really do proficiency-oriented teaching since they only had three hours a week and thus the students could not gain proficiency. This is precisely the everyday-concept of proficiency which one should not associate with the 'Proficiency Movement.'

So what is 'Proficiency' about? First of all it is a method of testing, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), which tests what students can do with the language, what they can talk about, and how well they can do it. We are looking for more than 'communicative' ability and more than acquired structures. If one can "muddle one's way through" in a language, one has a certain proficiency; but the less one needs to muddle, the higher one is rated. The OPI takes into account language performance both below and above levels traditionally attended to in the classroom. It recognizes a 'muddling ability' that might only be good enough for an F in any class, but it also provides for speakers at the other end who do not 'muddle' at all -- an ability that cannot be achieved in classroom teaching (for a more detailed treatment with references see Kuhn-Osius).

What could "Proficiency based teaching" possibly mean? Phrased in such a global way, it means little. We know many things that work and many that do not, but we do not have an overall knowledge about activities that will lead to the highest proficiency in the shortest possible time (Byrnes, 112f). We have a strong hunch that "Proficiency based teaching" does not mean teaching to muddle -- that would be teaching for low proficiency. Instead of offering another panacea, let us advance the first part of a possible definition: Proficiency based teaching means first of all listening to what your students can really do. We have done this for the past four years or so at Hunter College by conducting dozens of interviews at the end of each semester.

At this point at least we have a very good idea what our students can do with their language in a life-like situation and how they are likely to progress. And this means we can tailor our demands concerning students' communicative language use to actual student ability. The proficiency orientation is not in any method, but in tailoring tasks to a level where students can perform them. In the past we assumed that students knew what we taught them, but could not specify the nature of this knowledge. Now we know what they know and insist on improving *life-like performance at their respective leve,* while *preparing them for the next higher level* And this we shall use as a working definition of "Proficiency based teaching."

ON READING PROFICIENCY AND READING FOR PROFICIENCY

What does reading proficiency mean? This is a very problematic area, and the Proficiency Guidelines may be in for some revision (Bernhardt) Reading Proficiency means the ability to get information from a written text in life-like situations. There are several problem areas in rating Reading Proficiency, which will be addressed as questions mostly without definitive answers.

1. How do we test how much readers have understood? We must ask them questions or observe their bevahior. If we ask questions in the FL, we may really test if students can understand not only the text, but also the questions, and if their active command is good enough to answer in the FL. But even if we ask in English, we may be testing recall, and we may ask questions about precisely that which a student happened to not understand, while we pass by that which was understood.

2. What does it mean to understand a text? How much information is there in a text and how much does one have to get out to understand it? The short-run answer is that a reader at any level can 'read' any text, but the amount of information extracted varies greatly. There is a story about a speed reader who read *War and Peace*. As he was asked what he learned from it, he answered "It's about Russia." So, we see, anybody can get some information out of any text, even if it's not more than that it's foreign. On the other hand, one can write articles and perhaps books about understanding a brief poem.

3. What is an easy text, and is it ever possible to say that a text is easy or hard across the board? In graduate reading courses I found that students had trouble with introductory texts for junior high schools, but could handle specialized texts in their discipline quite well, since they brought a lot more knowledge to them. This was most true in the sciences. On the other hand, supposedly easy texts such as menus may be linguistically quite difficult. The lively debate regarding "readability formulas" for childrens' books and school books in the USA attests to the fact that the difficulty of reading texts cannot easily be ascertained.

There is an emerging consensus among reading researchers that reading is a mixture of bottom-up and top-down processing involving the entire world-knowledge of the reader (Carell et al.). What all this means is that readers will read for meaning, the better one reads, the more one will read 'through' the text for the meaning. Depending on how closely the text corresponds to the schemata of the readers, the faster they will read, projecting what is most likely to appear next in the text. One could also envision a text which is so predictable that readers put it down since they have already projected the end. In other words: Reading is a process of mediation between things known and things unknown. If one knows nothing that connects with the text, there will be no mediation; if the text contains nothing new, there will be no mediation either (these two are the theoretical end poles of a spectrum).

The following examples show that 'reading' is strongly influenced by word recognition and projection. It is not a pure bottom-up process of putting together words from their constitutive elements, but rather a very rapid process of recognition, classification, and projection. It is much easier to process and to recall letter sequences accepted in the lexicon of the English language or that at least follow the rules of word formation in English, the code, as it were. For meaningful prediction, the number of possible word completions is limited according to the rules of word formation and, in most cases, restricted to those combinations that are accepted as part of English vocabulary. It may be easier or harder to predict whole words and sentence completions, depending on the numerous rules and constraints imposed by phonetic, morphological, syntactical, or logical restrictions. Many restrictions are also imposed by world knowledge, since one knows that certain situations are more likely to occur in real life and thus are more likely to be talked about than others. The classifications used for the following listings are approximate.

Uncoded vs. coded input
tcas, tsac, skcud, lyejl
cats, cast, ducks, jelly

Uncodable and codable input
smmiy, iskttelac
mimsy, sickitate

Prediction of letter sequences:
c...t (cat, cot, cut, caught ..., but no single consonant, no i or e ...)
prot..... (protect, protest, protean, protract, protuberance ... and derivatives)

Prediction of words:
The cat ..... the hat comes back. (must be a preposition, with cultural knowledge of Dr. Seuss, one can predict with much more certainty)
I did not like .... look on ...... face. (must be determiners)
The .... of Mr. Prendergast's transactions is amazing. (no prediciton possible)
The .... of Mr. Boesky's transactions is mind boggling. (most likely size or criminality for those who remember the inside trading scandal)
President Kennedy was .... in Dallas. (most likely: shot, murdered, ...)
Evolution proceeds by the principle of nat.... selection.
The United States will soon have a nat.... election.
Mr. John Doe appears to be a nat.... candidate. (national, natural, nativist, ...)

Native language readers can spell their way through a text like a child learning to read, slowly recovering sounds from letters, words from sounds, sentences from words, and texts from sentences. This pure bottom-up method is obviously not effective, and it presupposes a rather simple text and message. Thus, it is not used much by experienced readers. There is no need to spell through everything because one knows what to expect and looks for it.

Projection in reading can be based on various areas of redundancy in a text, i.e. rules to which words, texts, and the world conform. These can be grouped as follows:
probability of letter combinations
probability of sentence structure
probability of collocations and combinations of words
probability of logical structures in a text
world knowledge and schemata. (Westhoff, 41)

There are a number of things that can be done to help foreign language readers by increasing their skills in top-down processing. Learners generally cannot make much use of the first three areas of redundancy (letter combinations, sentence structure, word combinations,) since these are the areas still to be studied/acquired. Teaching them more of the language would improve their abilities in localized projecting as well as bottom-up processing, but it takes a long time. Teaching them to project and activate their logical ability and world knowledge can be done fairly quickly, since it relies mostly on knowledge and strategies students have at their disposal anyway, even if they may not use them.

Projecting and predicting are limited by the world knowledge a reader can activate or the amount of information that can be supplied in short order. The science students mentioned above had certain knowledge which other people had not. In evaluating their paraphrases of highly specialized articles, their non-scientist instructor had to rely largely on the reverse process, paying attention to syntax etc., i.e. he had to process the texts from the bottom up. Helpful and necesary as it is, our world knowledge may lead us astray. In a recent study, students were given a text about Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev appearing on Soviet and U.S. television respectively (Bernhardt/ Berkemeyer, p. 17-22, 26). Most students read the text as a text about peace talks. Their top-down processing enabled them to connect Reagan and Gorbachev in a meaningful way, but their bottom-up processing prevented them from finding the textual evidence that invalidated their hypothesis. This is mentioned to avoid the misunderstanding that for foreign language reading "top-down" is somehow 'better' than "bottom-up". One needs both.

To help students reach the peak of their proficiency in reading, it is necessary to practice predicting and help them operate at the edge of their linguistic and cognitive capabilities. Whether having to rely on existent schemata with insufficient recourse to bottom-up processing can help us in getting information about unfamiliar things is doubtful. In other words, could one learn much about theoretical physics if one knew neither the physics nor the language well? Probably not, but this would be reading on a Superior or higher level, which is beyond our reach in most instructional situations.

Another aspect that must be addressed here is not reading proficiency, but reading for proficiency. Stephen Krashen (1982) essentially says that all you need is comprehensible input to acquire a language. While the extreme form of this hypothesis is overstated (Dihoff), it seems obvious that reading at a level which is slightly above one's ability (at i+1) will be beneficial to one's language acquisition. If nothing else, one will broaden one's vocabulary and improve one's general fluency and readiness. The question is now, to what extent reading at the peak of one's proficiency and reading for proficiency can be the same thing.

Reading practice in the sense of prediciting practice most likely will not provide students with reading experiences slightly above their level. In fact, as long as they read at a level of i+1, they may not need any reading practice per se, because their language knowledge and their knowledge of schemata would be more or less balanced. As long as students have to largely rely on their schemata with imperfect control from bottom-up processing, they are, in effect, "muddling through" the language. If students operate at the limit of their predictive abilities in reading, the benefit to general language proficiency will operate close to zero. One reason is that the strong focus on content precludes extensive intake, another reason is that being able to predict a meaning 'from context' makes attention to the predicted 'word' unnecessary. It is only with texts that are truly at i+1 that this intake can take place. A student who cannot yet narrate about concrete events will benefit little from abstract deliberations and argumentation. On the other hand, if such a student is exposed to an interesting story on a concrete level without too many schema breaks, language has a much better chance of being acquired in a pleasurable fashion. In this case the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processing has a chance to be what it is in first-language reading, i.e. non-conscious or semi-conscious, focussed on the content of the text and not on ways to figure out the content.

The thoughts above indicate that there are two types of reading texts for the emerging reader. The first tends to be over the students' heads linguistically but can be understood if students consciously activate schemata and process top-down. This type of text can contribute information to what students know, but understanding often is very incomplete compared to what a native would understand and remains tied to previous knowledge. This type of text will be called "information text". The second type of text may be conveniently called "input text, " since that is its function in the learning process. The boundary between the two types is fluid, depending on where students are. One may surmise that the dichotomy between the two types disappears as a learner approaches and finally reaches a level of Superior. Both types of texts may play important roles in the overall development of a student's language ability, but being aware of their differences will be helpful.

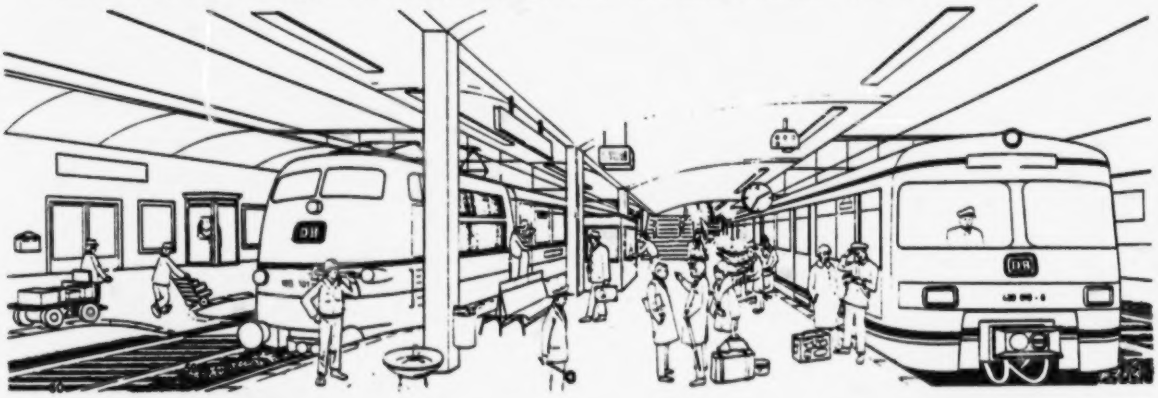
There is a third type of reading text. It is a grammatical display text. Textbook dialogs or chapter texts in later chapters tend to be display texts, since they cover tasks that a student cannot really handle, but they display how some grammatical phenomena and vocabulary are used. The texts may be valuable explanative tools and should be treated as such. One should be aware of the fact that many textbook dialogues are actually for reading and analysis only.

The reading texts in most textbooks lead a life on the edge between being information texts and being display texts. Most of them permit little activation of schemata, partly because they try so hard to tell new things about all German-speaking countries. Linguistically, they are difficult texts pretending to be easy. They are far beyond students' active proficiency level, but tend to be so doctored that they permit neither input reading nor information reading. Besides, most exercises presuppose that students in the first year can really discuss abstract cultural topics in German. In other words, we tend to have non-texts with unmanageable speaking tasks.

READING TO PROMOTE PROFICIENCY

When we talk about three different types of text (information, input, display texts), what are the practical implications for the classroom? The following will present some texts and how they have been treated in our classrooms. We will begin with information texts, since they are the most common type of text to be found in real life. We will talk especially about three short stories used in our fourth semester, presenting both pre-reading activities and post-reading tasks. The presentation continues with some input texts and a display text. Our students in the first year may reach a level of Intermediate Low/Mid, the second year may bring them up to Intermediate Mid/ High, while the third year (voluntary) typically has students in the Intermediate Mid/High range with some reaching Advanced. This fact must be kept in mind when looking at the following texts and their proposed treatment.

For all texts that can be classified as information texts, pre-reading exercises should be done, keeping the students' proficiency level in mind. It is important that students focus on what will be presented in a text before they begin to read it. By asking themselves "What do I expect to read in this text? " and "What do I already know about this subject?" the stage is set for a more successful reading experience. Pre-reading can consist of vocabulary work (e.g. definitions), we have also used pictures to work with vocabulary or explain cultural background (see illustration). Other activities have included a mini-lesson in geography and history on a level at which students function, i.e. simple sentences that an Intermediate speaker can understand(practice of listening!). One can explain in simple sentences that during World War II not only soldiers but many civilians were killed and many were missing after the war. This is necessary information for one of the stories discussed below. After becoming familiar with certain facts, students can read the texts with much more success.



We have also used pre-reading exercises to review and reinforce grammar. The following exercise reviews past tense verb forms, based on information from a story discussed below:

1. Sie fielen sich in die Arme.
2. Sie riefen "Du!"
3. Sie standen sich gegenuber.
4. Sie spurten und horten die anderen Leute nicht.
5. Die anderen Leute beschwerten sich, aber das storte sie nicht. ...

Students read the sentences and then transformed them into the present perfect tense, the tense that is more important for their active usage at the Intermediate level.

After one has prepared and read a text, the question is what to do afterwards. After all, we must do something with these texts in class. To find out what students understand, one must ask them in English. But to obtain progress in 'active proficiency,' one must work with the text in the target language as well. One should not ask someone fresh out of the requirement to tell in German what the ethical implications are of Little Red Riding Hood's straying from the straight path to her grandmother's house. Discussing in abstract fashion the conflicting demands of obedience, freedom, revolt against authority, and avoiding of mortal danger is linguistically not easy, even if "Little Red Riding Hood" is not a hard text to understand (a typical problem in dealing with fairy tales). Instead, one must tailor the tasks to what students can do. The Proficiency Guidelines offer a clear notion of what one can demand of students going through the Intermediate level: concrete tasks in general, simple description, and retelling.

Max von der Grün, "Masken"

Two former lovers run into each other at the Cologne train station. They both talk about their successes in life, which had been a sore point during their relationship. Both of them are lying, but because they believe each other's lies they are afraid to try to reestablish their relationship, although they both would like to.

This story (Isaak/Ray, 29-35) is a text at the border between an input text and an information text for some of our students, but strongly tending towards the latter. It can be understood due to various factors: Students can relate to the schemata present in the text, the language is not too difficult, and the text is straightforward and does not require students to draw many inferences.

SCHEMATA (top-down)
Known: - Place: train station, café;
- Interpersonal relationships: former lovers meet again by accident;
- Time frame: a day in July (today);
- Professional life and careers.
Unknown: - Geography;
- possibly train station.

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS (bottom-up)
- all tenses are present in the text;
- indicative and subjunctive forms occur;
- active and passive voice;
- glossary explains most important unknown words;
- sentence structure is relatively simple (appr. 7.5 words per sentence); only first paragraph contains very long sentence with subordinate clauses;
*-punctuation.

The students have been taught general grammar in the previous three semesters and should be able to handle all structures passively. Bottom-up processing is within reach as much as necessary. Punctuation is a problem, however, since the author does not use quotation marks. Without outward signals, the text moves from comments by the narrator to dialogue between the main characters and to their thoughts:

> Dann haben wir ja beide Glück gehabt, sagte sie, und dachte, daß er immer noch gut aussieht. Gewiß, er war Älter geworden, aber das steht ihm gut. Schade, wenn er nicht so eine Bombenstellung hätte, ich wurde ihn frage, ja, ich ihn, ob er noch an den dummen Streit von damals denkt und ob er mich noch haben will. Ja, ich wurde ihn fragen. Aber jetzt? (Isaak/Ray, p. 31)

This difficulty must resolved to facilitate bottom-up processing. The class was divided into groups, each group being assigned part of the text. Each group then had to figure out for its segment what Eric says, what he thinks, what Renate says, what she thinks, and what the narrator says. Then the different roles were read. This gave the text a 'three-dimensional' aspect and helped the two lines of processing, bottom-up and top-down, to interact. Top-down processing is relatively easy since the story deals with human relationships and behavior that are not culture-specific for either the U.S. or Germany, and bottom-up processing has been facilitated by the classrom exercise.

The next step is to use the reading material to promote overall proficiency. Students usually are now ready to actively use the information from the text. Since the students can function at an Intermediate level, characterized by the ability to ask and answer questions, dialogues are an ideal format. Obviously, "Masken" lends itself well to this kind of task. The following outline was projected on an overhead projector to provide students with a framework within which their own dialogue had to take place:

Erich	**Renate**
Mein Gott! Das ist ja	
Wie ......?	Gut, und dir?
	Wir haben uns schon lange nicht mehr ......
	Es ist ...... her!
Eine	Mas machst du jetzt?
	...... verheiratet?
	...... arbeitest ......?
Ich	
Ich	
Ich	
Und du?	....
	....
	....
	Wohin?
Ich bin geschaftlich	
Und du?	Ich ......

Another exercise that proved helpful was a questionnaire concentrating on the major facts in the story:

1. Personen:
2. Alter (ca.):
3. Ort:
4. Jahreszeit:
5. Tageszeit:
6. Wohnort von Renate:
7. Reiseziel von Renate:
8. Wohnort von Erich:
9. Reiseziel von Erich:
10. Renates Beruf:
11. Erichs Beruf:
12. Personenstand, Grunde dafur:
    - Renate
    - Erich
13. Wann haben sie sich getrennt? Warum?
14. Die Gefuhle von beiden heute?

Otto Flake, "Der Brief"

A man has his attic cleaned. By accident he finds a letter which he wrote 20 years ago to his wife who had just eloped. In it he had offered her that she could return but she had never replied. Now he finds that he accidentally did not mail the letter.

This story (Isaak/Ray, p. 17-20) is an information text for the students, comparable to "Masken." It is much more difficult, but students can still process it top-down.

SCHEMATA (top-down)
Known: - place: house and garden;
- interpersonal relationships: estranged couple;

- activities: cleaning the attic;
- objects: a letter that was never sent;
- double time frame: 1935 and 1955.

Unknown: - geography: location of Partenkirchen;
- history;
- cultural information: role of a housekeeper.

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS (bottom-up)
- all tenses;
- indicative and subjunctive;
- active and passive;
- extensive amount of unknown words in glossary;
- sentence structure is very difficult (appr. 16 words per sentence)

The students can recognize individual words, but the length and complexity of the sentences as well as the looseness of their connective features obscure the general topics and interculturally transferable schemata so much that the Intermediate student can no longer decipher the story:

> ... Was war das? Er hatte damals, es mußte 1935 gewesen sein, Lis unter dieser Adresse geschrieben und keine Antwort erhalten. Und dieser Brief hier, der offenbar nicht abgeschickt worden war, wie ordnete er sich ein, was hatte es mit ihm auf sich? Er ging ins Zimmer zurück, setzte sich an den Schreibtisch und schnitt den Brief auf. Da stand das Datum, von vor zwanzig Jahren. Erster Juli 1935, und da stand, daß er, von ihrem Brief aus Partenkirchen erschüttert, nach reichlicher Überlegung bereit sei, sie wieder aufzunehmen, zu vergessen und einen neuen Abschnitt mit ihr zu beginnen unter der Bedingung, daß sie vorerst nur als zwei Hausgenossen miteinander verkehrten. (Isaak/Ray, 18)

The teacher must facilitate understanding of this text. First the events of 1935 had to be separated from the ones of 1955. This was done with an exercise that offered listening practice as well. Sentences paraphrasing certain aspects of the text were written on large pieces of paper and randomly read to the class. The students, who had done a first reading of the story at home, had to locate the action either in 1935 or 1955. The sheets of paper were put on the board under the respective date. Students were then asked to sort the sentences chronologically according to the text. This paraphrasing helped the students understand the crucial part of the text: that the letter was written but never sent. Once the students had understood this, the class proceeded tro a writing exercise. As a group or homework assignment, the letter was composed. The task was extended further sometimes by assigning an imaginary response. In this way a difficult information text could be 'brought down' and used to promote overall proficiency.

Heinrich Böll, "Du fährst zu oft nach Heidelberg"

A young man has just finished his teacher training. He went to the university after being trained for a manual trade and was helped in his efforts by the attention he attracted as a bicycle racer. He earned some money as a student by giving various language classes to adults and also is helping political refugees from Chile. He seems to have difficulties in finding employment, which are somehow connected with his frequent trips to Heidelberg. Everyone suggests he should go to Heidelberg less often, but he is never clearly told why. In the end he seems to be resolved to keep up his visits there.

SCHEMATA (top-down)

- system of vocational training in West Germany;
- educational system in West Germany;
- different social classes and their political leanings;
- prestige of various professions;
- relationship between education and job prospects;
- political situation in Chile after 1973;
- status of people seeking political asylum in West Germany;
- political mood in the 70's, "Radikalenerlaß";
- civil service system;
- cycling;
- time frame: Sunday and Monday in June, with references to years in the protagonist's past
- place: protagonist's apartment, parents' home, fiancée's home, brother's apartment, office in the ministry of education

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS (bottom-up)

- all tenses;
- indicative and subjunctive;
- active and passive;
- vocabulary is standard and many words are glossed;
- sentence structure is complex, with relative clauses, extended adjective constructions, etc. (appr. 17.5 words per sentence).

This is an extremely difficult text (Isaak/Ray, 75-82) that can no longer be read in a better than global fashion by most students in the fourth semester, and we can see why. The lengthy list of schemata and the length of the summary show the complexity of this story, which cannot be processed top-down. An additional difficulty of the text is that many things are only alluded to, and the students have to make inferences to grasp the meaning. They may be able to understand particular passages from bottom up, but the overall understanding is lacking due to the missing frame of reference.

In certain passages a very precise understanding of details is necessary, as in the following sentence:

> Er hatte doch an der Volkshochschule mit seinen Spanisch-, am spanischen Abendgymnasium mit seinen Deutschkursen Erfolg gehabt (Isaak/Ray, 76)

The different usage of the prepositions *mit* and *in* (or *bei*) with *Erfolg haben* is crucial. The sentence is the only indication in the text that the protagonist worked as a part-time teacher at a school of continuing education and a Spanish evening school. Students in a fourth-semester German class can usually not grasp such details. Reading in detail is a Superior- level task.

Given the difficulties inherent in a text like this, one may seriously consider not using it with Intermediate-level students. But, provided one does want to use it, what can one do? The unknown cultural and historical frameworks have to be given. Depending on the time one can spend on pre-reading activities, one can explain certain concepts in simple German. Others, however, are too complex and need explanation in English, e.g. the civil service system in Germany or the *Radikalenerlaß*.

One exercise to sharpen students' cognitive skills was the following: The instructor paraphrased passages or sentences, put them on the overhead projector, and asked students to find the corresponding passage in the text. This exercise shows students that an idea can be expressed more simply, and it helps them with their later writing assignments:

Er war statt nach Hause nach Heidelberg gefahren, hatte Diego und Teresa nicht
angetroffen, auch Raoul nicht. Diegos Freund; war auf der Ruckfahrt in eine
1. Autoschlange geraten, gegen neun bei seinem Bruder Karl vorbeigefahren,
der ihm Bier aus dem Eisschrank holte, wahrend Hilde ihm Spiegeleier briet: sie
sahen gemeinsam im Fernsehen eine Reportage uber die Tour de Suisse, bei der
2. Eddy Merckx keine gute Figur machte, und als er wegging, hatte Hilde ihm einen
3. Papiersack voll abgelegter Kinderkleider gegeben für "diesen spirrigen netten
Chilenen und seine Frau."

1. Bei seinem Bruder und seiner Schwagerin aß er Abendessen.
2. Eddy Merckx fuhr nicht gut bei der Tour des Suisse.
3. Hilde hat Kleider, die ihren Kindern zu klein sind. Sie gibt sie für die Chilenen mit

Another exercise involved writing down a list of activities and having the students order them chronologically according to what the protagonist did on Sunday morning, noon, afternoon, etc. These facts then served as the basis for retelling the simple events of the story. More cannot really be done with this text, since any further discussion would involve stating and defending opinion or talking about abstract ideas -- all Superior-level tasks.

INPUT TEXTS

Input texts are hard to find at the earlier levels, especially if one wants authentic materials. Children's literature provides excellent texts, if one's students do not object. Since input texts are easily read, one should not smother them with extensive exercises. The following text is from Ursula Wolfel's *Achtundzwanzig Lachgeschichten*:

> Einmal wollte eine große Familie verreisen: Mutter, Vater und vier Kinder. Sie haben auf dem Bahnsteig gestanden, und alle waren sehr aufgeregt. Am aufgeregtesten war das kleinste Kind. Der Zug ist gekommen, und der Vater hat die Koffer genommen, die Mutter hat die Taschen genommen, und die großen Kinder haben den Korb mit den Butterbroten und das Netz mit den Apfelsinen und die Limonadenflasche und den Fotoapparat genommen. Das kleinste Kind sollte nur seinen Teddy tragen ... (Wolfel, p. 30)

The train comes, the youngest child disappears, is frantically sought, and is finally found sitting in the train waiting for the others. The simplicity of this story is clear from the few lines quoted above (almost half of the story). Understanding is aided by pictures that accompany each story in the book. Pre-reading activities for these stories are unnecessary from the second semester on up. To check comprehension it is enough to a look at the picture and ask students what they see. The stories can be retold in various ways if one wants to activate what students have learned.

There are a number of commercial texts available for Intermediate High students, such as Hueber's series "Lesetexte Deutsch" (Grundstufe). Good results were obtained with Edith Schmitz's *Schreck in der Abendstunde: Kurzkrimis zum Selberlosen*. It is a collection of detective stories with a riddle. These were assigned as outside reading in a fifth-semester class. Since the texts themselves contain questions and clues toward their solution, students were simply asked to write down the solution to the riddles posed in the story. The degree of understanding to which these texts should be read is predetermined by the texts themselves. Their main purpose is to provide students with reasonably motivating input beyond what goes on in class.

Many textbooks and readers contain texts by authors such as Helga Novak (Moeller/Liedloff, p. 348). The grammar is easy but the texts have an absurdist content. Such texts cannot be recommended as input texts since one cannot really process them top-down. The result of the bottom-up reading does not jell into identifiable schemata and thus leaves students unsure of their understanding. Students understand the sentences, but may not know why the story is told. Such texts challenge the traditions of storytelling and their events cannot be discussed easily in either English or German.

TEXTBOOK TEXT

Some remarks are in order about a fairly typical reading selection from a textbook (Moeller/Liedloff, p. 319-321). Textbook texts tend to be non-texts, and one always has some difficulties dealing with them. Our example talks about leisure time activites in Germany. The students can transfer their own schemata to the general topic. They can also learn some facts about the length of the work week or the school day, etc. The text talks in some detail about two (presumably fictitious) German students and their respective activites. Our students can quite easily relate to what one of them does, since his activities revolve around going to lectures, the library, bars, and a movie theater. The other student's involvement with her study of music and a citizens' action group is more foreign to most students and also is not very typical for Germans in general. The text then trails off to touch upon some other examples of leisure-time behavior.

The text naturally incorporates the grammatical principles presented in the chapter, in this case the subjunctive. The appropriate parts of the text were picked out as illustrations. The text topic was used to ork on writing and speaking skills. Students were asked to prepare a questionnaire on leisure-time activities. Many took ideas from the text and incorporated them into their personalized questions. In class, they worked in pairs eliciting answers to their questions and then reporting their findings to the class. In other words, this specific text was put to use as a grammar display text, and its topic and vocabulary were then used to expand students' active abilities.

SELECTION OF TEXTS

The question of text selection brings up the question of authentic texts. The debate on this is popular, but mostly beside the point. While unaltered texts written by native speakers to communicate with each other are essential for testing reading proficiency, the point in teaching is not whether a text is authentic, but whether the reading situation is authentic.

A letter written by a German in Germany with intent to communicate something to someone is doubtlessly an authentic text. However, if this text is read by people it was not addressed to, the reading situation is not authentic. While researchers, the police, or the IRS will occasionally read letters not addressed to them, authentic reading situations require that the text be intended for the reader in some form, either as a personal communication or a public statement. It is part of true communication that the sender of a message adjust his message to the receiver both in presuppositions and in linguistic difficulty. Consequently, the 'inauthentic' text may be the one for an authentic reading situation, if it is written with intent to communicate something to someone. Just because the addressee is a learner of German and the sender adjusts his/her language (rough tuning) does not make the reading situation inauthentic. Of course, learners must be able to understand texts that are not written for foreigners if they are to have high proficiency. But there is nothing wrong with texts that take the learners' limitations into account, as long as they are not mistaken to be the same as texts that natives use to communicate among each other.

To read texts that natives use to communicate with each other, students must have the same background that natives have on some level (the linguistic level being not up to par). Areas of congruence may concern anything from interculturally transferable functions of life to the highly formalized events of science. It is in these contexts that students are most likely to be able to process top-down with accuracy, be they scientists reading scholarly articles or first-year students reading a children's story. Insofar as literature often deals with universal human questions, literary texts remain prime candidates for authentic reading situations.

Assuming that we are all expert in checking texts for unconquerable grammar and/or vocabulary, there is a simple technique to test whether a narrative text is likely to be processable from the top down: Can you retell the story in three to five shortish sentences in English so that your students would accept it as a story? The sentences must retell the events, not describe the text. If you can summarize in such a fashion, there are probably not too many presuppositions and the text has proper closure. Students will most likely be able to read such a story with ease.

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The picture of the train station was taken from *Oxford-Duden Picture German-English Dictionary.* New York: OUP, Clarendon, 1979.

THE APPLICATION OF HISTORICAL LINGUISTIC INFORMATION TO THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Thirty-five years ago, with regard to bettering the preparation of the language teacher, Pulgram (1954:78) wrote:

> Let the prospective language teacher become acquainted with the important linguistic facts of life; let him take good courses in general linguistics and in the descriptive and historical study of the language he wants to teach.

But the information which has been made available to the language teacher and subsequently applied to the classroom has come from synchronic analysis alone; that is, what Pulgram referred to as the "descriptive" study of the language in question. Linguists, applied as well as historical, have ignored the second half of Pulgram's proposal as regards the applicability and usefulness of such historical linguistic information in the classroom. It is in an attempt to resume the second half of Pulgram's proposal, and in the hope that language teachers will find my suggestions useful, that I urge all foreign language teachers to become familiar with, and to implement, the available historical information to the foreign language classroom.

Now, one might ask, why bother? Don't students have enough information to deal with when learning a second language? True enough. But there are two good reasons for incorporating historical insight into our teaching routines. First, students often ask the question "Why?" regarding certain puzzling facts and "irregularities" of the foreign language they are studying. Second, it is well known, and therefore practiced in other areas of study (e.g., sociology, government, etc.) that for a good understanding of the present state of affairs, a look at the history of the situation in question is desirable, if indeed not indispensable. Why, then, should the study of a foreign language be any different?

I raise these two points from experience, as a student of Spanish, as a teacher of Spanish, and as a language historian. As a student myself, I asked my teachers many questions, to which I received a response like, "That's just the way it is, learn it!", "It's just irregular", or "*No me preguntes por qué*". I did not find these "explanations" very satisfying. As a language historian, I have found that many of the so-called "irregularities", from a historical perspective, are not really irregular at all. Furthermore, as a teacher of Spanish, I have found that students find these brief, historically oriented answers not only interesting, but a lot more satisfying than a response like, "That's just the way it is, learn it!", "It's just irregular", or "*No me preguntes por qué*". Before I continue, I would like to make clear that I am not advocating long explanations, nor that all grammar points be taught from a historical perspective. Below we will review some common questions which can be answered briefly.

I would like to demonstrate first, however, the explanatory nature of historical analysis. The nature of synchronic analysis, i.e., analysis of a language at one given point in time, (usually the modern language), is such that it *describes*, i.e., it provides a description or statement of the facts of the modern language. Diachronic or historical analysis, on the other hand, *explains* how these facts came to be as they are. Let us look at one example. Synchronically, we can state that the pronouns *le*/*les* become *se* when appearing before *lo*, *la*, *los*, *las*. Without looking historically, we might try to account for this phenomenon with unfounded, *ad hoc* explanations like, "*le lo* sounds bad", or "*le lo* means 'stupid'". Historically, however, we find that this phenomenon resulted from a series of phonological changes:
ILLI ILLUM > li ellu > ljelo > ŷelo > želo > šelo > s̍elo (by analogy to reflexive *se* and confusion of *ś* and *s̍*). (Revised from Lathrop 1984:156-57).

Now let us look at some of the common questions raised by students regarding "irregularities" which can be answered with brief historical accounts.

(1) Why do *ser* and *ir* have the same form in the preterite? First, it is really the preterite of the verb *ser* used for both verbs. *Ser* was often used in Old Spanish where *estar* is now used: so that *fui a casa* meant "I was at home". Then ensued a shift in meaning; in order to be at a particular place, one first had to go there. Thus *fui a casa* = "I was at home" > "I went home".

(2) Why does the imperfect of ver retain the stem vowel? Because in Old Spanish the verb was veer, like leer and creer. Thus we have in Modern Spanish veía, like leía and creía. OSp. veer later contracted to ver while leer and creer did not.

The explanations above are of the type students find interesting. Others, like the following, are not only interesting, but hold a practical value.

(1) Why do all three conjugations have the same endings in the future? (This phenomenon applies to all Romance languages). Because the future forms are really a combination of the infinitive + the verb haber (OSp. aver). Haber was used in place of (or interchangeably with) tener. If one said he/she had to do something, this obligation carried an implied futurity. Again, there was a shift in meaning: hablar é con él "I have to speak with him" > "I will speak with him". Thus, the practical aspect of this explanation is that the students, already knowing the forms of haber (for the present perfect) now know the endings for the future (by taking of the h-) without having to re-memorize them.

(2) Why is the masculine definite article used for nouns beginning with a stressed a, e.g., el agua, but las aguas; el águila, las águilas, etc.? First, students must realize that it is not the masculine definite article. Rather, it is the first half of the feminine article from Latin: ILLA AQUA > ila agua > ela agua > elaagua > el agua. But, ILLAS AQUAS > ilas aguas > elas aguas > las aguas. Thus, if students realize that historically this is not the masculine definite article, they will not confuse the gender of the noun when modifying it, i.e., el agua pura, not *el agua puro (unlike el poema épico, un poeta famoso etc.).

(3) Giving the Latin base too for the "irregular" past participles will facilitate the learning of correct forms through association with English derivatives. In these cases, the infinite offers no clue to the formation of the past participle.

Infinitive	Spanish	Latin	English derivatives
morir	muerto	mortu(u)m	mortuary, mortician
poner	puesto	positum	position, posit, post
ver	visto	vis(t)um	vision, visor, visual
escribir	escrito	scriptum	scripture,manu(script)
abrir	abierto	apertum	aperture, apertural

Through the Latin connection, and association with the English derivatives, students will more readily remember the -_t_- or -_st_- element of the past participle, thus avoiding the common erros *_morido_, *_ponido_, *_veído_, *_escribido_, etc.

In conclusion, I maintain that the application of such historical linguistic information will replace the typical inaccurate, uninteresting, and unhelpful responses like those mentioned at the beginning of this paper with enlightening, helpful ones, which will enrich the study of the target language for both the teacher and students alike.

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WHAT'S IN THE BAG (AND WHY?)
TANGIBILIA FOR THE CLASSROOM

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In their book Teaching German: A Practical Guide, Wilga Rivers, K. M. Dell'Orto, and V. J. Dell'Orto point to a method of imparting a basis corpus of vocabulary which involves "discussing objects in the classroom (...) in a realistic setting," a practice they refer to as "object centered."[1] This method begins with common classroom items such as books, windows, tables, etc., and moves on to an equally accessible classroom item, namely students. As a variant, they suggest that the teacher "use the contents of a handbag or shopping basket instead of classroom objects." Later on, attention shifts to pictorial representations of things unavailable in the normal classroom, such as "houses, gardens, airports, farms."

As far as it goes, the authors' description gives a positive assessment of the method. With a bit of imagination, however, the "object centered"--or "shopping bag"--method can be endlessly expanded to provide not merely a store of common vocabulary, but a basis for student assimilation of more advanced morphological and syntactic features. In what follows, I will provide some ideas for collecting and utilizing a set of objects which can serve as linguistic reference points in the classroom.

First, a shopping bag need not merely contain everyday shopping or "classroom" items which, according to Rivers/Dell'Orto/Dell'Orto, limit students to "accurate production of very trite sentences which they would not conceivably wish to use in spontaneous conversation."[2] In fact, contrary to traditional object-oriented practice, the objects may transcend the bounds of group categories such as "everyday student objects" or "realia in the target language." Novelty stores and children's toyboxes will produce a panoply of low-priced (and in the case of the toyboxes, often free) items which lend themselves admirably to classroom use. The contents of the bag should under no circumstances be predictable; in fact, the odder the collection of objects the greater will be the student interest they generate. (The bag itself, incidentally, should sport a large legend in the target language, and the word for "bag" should be introduced early on.)

Second, the vocabulary supplied from the bag should never remain static; it should change along with the grammatical knowledge of the students. The concept of **die Karte** in German can, in the course of introducing compounds in the first semester, become **die Landkarte**, **die Speisekarte**, or **die Fahrkarte** with the appropriate objects held up or circulated for display. In this context, **realia** play a major role; one can begin with familar American objects (a McDonald's container), move on to similar objects imprinted in the target language (a **Viertel-Pfünder mit Käse** container), and finally produce completely alien objects of cultural importance (a ready-mix package of **Knödel** or a **Schmalzlerflasche**).

Third, especially in languages with complicated morphological systems (e.g., genders, differing declensional patterns, and case paradigms) the contents should reflect as much **morphological** diversity as possible. A bag for a Latin class would contain examples from all five declensions plus major sub-groupings, e.g., first declension masculines and various third declension root types; a Russian bag would contain examples of the three genders as well as plenty of masculine animate/inanimate and shifted stress/non-shifted stress contrasts.

Bearing in mind these three principles, let us turn to a sample collection of objects which will cover a variety of grammatical points in German.

Every collection should have as its core a group of similar objects which correspond to a major syntactic feature in the target language, in our example, gender. This allows the students a basic set of morphological reference points with which one can compare later additions, e.g., by explaining that **die Liebe** is a bisyllabic feminine in **-e** just like **die Schlange**. My own bag contains several rubber toy animals, one for each gender in German: a shark **(der Haifisch)** nicknamed "Bruce" or "Jascha Haifisch" according to the cultural horizon of the class; a mouse **(die Maus)**; a porcupine **(das Stachelschwein)**; and, to cover weak masculine nouns, a lion and a bear **(der Löwe und der Bär)**. One might just as easily form a core with vehicles **(der Zug, die Straßenbahn, das Auto)** or place settings **(der Löffel, die Gabel, das Messer)**. It is always good to have duplicates of every item in order to drill plurals when the time comes.

Once the students have mastered the concept of gender and can identify the objects in the nominative (i.e., **Das ist der/ein Haifisch)**, it is time to introduce clusters of objects of the same gender: for masculine, a glove, a hat, a **Bierdeckel**, a pen, a styrofoam arm from a jewelry display; for feminine, a snake, a cup, a fork, a newspaper; for neuter, a book, a rubber band, a piece of chalk, a knife (for contrasting **das Messer/der Messer**, one might add a gauge of any type). These items, when presented in pairs, also cover all the common plural types in German, thus serving as an initial learning experience and later as reinforcement.

At this point, we have merely improved a bit on the traditional "object centered" canon. The next step demands from both student and instructor a great deal of imagination and ironic detachment: The class will now play with the objects.

How one approaches waving unusual and often comical items at a group of students depends on the instructor's personality and rapport with the students. From personal experience, I predict that the students will impart to the objects the degree of earnestness with which one deals with the grammar. If it is made clear from the onset that the objects represent an entertaining means to a serious end, one on which they will in fact be graded, most students will treat the introduction of a rubber shark into the classroom with interest (at best) or irony (at worst).

At the beginning of class, each student receives one object (by instructor's fiat or by student's request). Possessive adjectives then come into play as we determine individual or joint ownership **(Ist das Ihre/eure Maus? Nein, das ist seine/unsre Maus!)** . Because my particular collection tends distinctly toward the feral, I use the pattern verb **fressen** to introduce the accusative case. The student with the shark announces that the shark is hungry **(Mein Haifisch hat Hunger)** and proceeds to eat all the other objects as their owners cry out in protest **(Der Haifisch frißt die/meine Tasse! usw.)**. When the dative is on the agenda, students transact exchanges of objects with dative personal pronouns **(He du, gib mir dein Stachelschwein!)** or arrange birthday presents for the animals **(Was schenkst du der Schlange zum Geburtstag?)**. In the adjective ending chapter, the objects take on surprising characteristics **(der weiße Hai, die südamerikanische Fledermaus, das liebe Stachelschwein)** which must remain with them throughout a repetition of all the previous exercises **(Was schenkst du der grünen Schlange zum Geburtstag?)**

With some imagination, the objects can enliven any grammar point by allowing students to focus on something concrete rather than the standard fictions of textbook usage which often involve marginally credible characters discussing topics of which the students have no experience. By forcing the students to describe or to seek (in a TPR setting) or to barter for tangible objects, one provides them with a real world context and a set of verifiable features to which they relate their language experience. "That is the white shark over there" seems, at least at the introductory level, preferable to the purely imaginary "That is the **Tübinger Stiftskirche** over there."

This method is, unfortunately, vulnerable to the charge that it generates absurdities, non-cultural contexts, and "very trite sentences which they [sc. the students] would not conceivably wish to use in spontaneous conversation." This is undeniably so, and for this reason the method should only be used--frequently in the first year of instruction, more sparingly for second-year grammar review--as a tool for the introduction and drilling of grammar points, i.e., as a springboard to a usage of the syntax with more complicated semantic items. The student who has completely assimilated the dative by showing a mouse to a shark will be able to transfer the pattern quickly to showing suitcases to the customs offical and will be ready for the larger leap into the metaphor of showing someone the ropes.

Furthermore, the objects can play a major role in more traditional methods. The book mentioned above gives a number of drill types, all of which lend themselves to the "concretization" provided by the objects, e.g., chain drills **(Wohnt dein Haifisch in Hamburg? --Nein, er wohnt in Bremen. Wohnt deine Maus in Bremen? usw.)** and, at a higher level, with the invention of stories involving the objects **(Eines Tages ging der Haifisch durch den Wald ...)**.[3] Used with wit and imagination, the "object centered" method provides an easy and concrete access to both morphological (gender, plurals) and syntactic features of the target language. The best objects are easily portable and easily available and should form a familiar and accessible reference point for the students when introducing new grammatical information to them. A bag full of everyday and not-so-everyday objects serves as an entertaining, yet pedagogically valuable tool in helping students assimilate unfamiliar grammatical categories.

Notes

[1] Wilga M. Rivers, Kathleen Mitchell Dell'Orto, and Vincent J. Dell'Orto, *Teaching German: A Practical Guide* 2nd. ed. (Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1988) 15-16.

[2] Rivers et al. 16.

[3] Rivers et al. 110ff.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE: MINITEL AND TELETEL, ELECTRONIC MARVELS WITH LANGUAGE TEACHING POTENTIAL

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The French Minitel and Télétel are children of the marriage between economic necessity and technological progress. As children will do, they've been growing quickly, aided by innovative marketing techniques and loving care from an ever expanding segment of the French public. For a while, they were in danger of remaining *enfants terribles*, but lately they seem to be developing a remarkable stability which carries with it the promise of a bright future.

In this presentation I will discuss aspects of Minitel and Télétel which relate to private rather than to commercial use for two reasons: First, the range of terminals and services available to companies is extensive and analysis here would quickly become highly technical. Secondly, we are interested primarily in the impact of Minitel and Télétel on general French culture rather than on their contribution to corporate evolution. Nevertheless, the effects of telecommunications on the business and industrial sector in France are important and I hope to make them the subject of a future presentation.

Minitel and Télétel were developed in the late 1970's and tried experimentally in the early 1980's by la Direction Générale des Télécommunications, now called France Télécom, a branch of the government run Postes et Télécommunications. Both Minitel and Télétel are part of what the French call *la télématique*, that is, the transmission of computerized data from station to station using small television-like terminals connected to existing telephone circuits by means of a modem. Although technically complicated, the system can be reduced rather easily to its essential elements. the Minitel, a small dark-beige cube with a foldout keyboard, is hooked to the normal telephone line called *le réseau téléphonique commuté* or RTC. Service providers (*les fournisseurs de services*), ranging from France Télécom itself to department and grocery stores, are linked to TRANSPAC, a vast computerized data bank network activated in 1978. the telephone network (RTC) and TRANSPAC are then linked by les Points d'Accès Vidéotex (PAVI), which make interaction between user and provider possible.[1]

The French Minitel terminal and Télétel system are not unique in Europe and were originally in competition with the British Prestel and the German Bildschirmtext, but the French have been the most successful by far in the development and popularization of their brand of télématique. Why did la Direction Générale des Télécommunications decide to introduce la télématique in the public sector in spite of the financial risks involved? The first reason related to competition within the European community. The British and Germans were going ahead with their telecommunications projects, and France had to follow suit or lose a potential market edge in Europe. The second impetus for introducing la télématique in France was budgetary. The French telephone system, long a target of both humor and invective, was being rapidly updated in the late 1970's and increasing numbers of customers necessitated the printing of ever larger and more expensive telephone directories. More customers also meant more employees, and la DGT found its overhead costs mounting exponentially. Finally, a market test of the Télétel system in the city of Vélizy in 1981 and 1982 was extremely successful and convinced la DGT that the general public would be receptive to the new system.[2]

The success of Minitel and Télétel rests on four marketing decisions which are as simple and practical as they are brilliant. First, telephone subscribers may use the basic Minitel terminal free of charge in place of the paper directory. When l'annuaire électronique (the electronic telephone directory) becomes available in a particular area (the so-called zones émeraudes), subscribers are invited by mail to pick up their rent-free units at a local distribution center. L'annuaire électronique contains the equivalent of the white and yellow pages for all of France, not just for the region in which the subscriber lives.[3] Second, the first three minutes of access to l'annuaire électronique are free and terminal time in excess of three minutes costs .73 F (about 13 cents) every two minutes.[4] Customers thus have a strong stimulus to opt for the Minitel and l'annuaire électronique and have done so in record numbers. By the end of February, 1988, France Télécom had distributed three and a half million units to homes and businesses and private use of Minitel accounted for 70% of Télétel traffic.[5]

The third crucial marketing decision accounting for the success of Minitel and Télétel relates to the services which complement l'annuaire électronique, and a brief explanation of their characteristics is appropriate here. All service providers are grouped electronically in a series of computerized data banks called *centres serveurs*. Customers reach the appropriate *centre serveur* by dialing a general access number followed by the personalized code of the service they want to contact. The number 36.15 (also called Télétel 3) links callers to *les centres serveurs* which are of the greatest interest to the public at large and it is here that the French again revealed their marketing skill. Dubbed *le kiosque* because it was originally dominated by the newspaper industry, the 36.15 benefits from a unique and simplified billing system not systematically applied to the other access numbers. Customers using Télétel 3 are charged for the time used and total charges are included on their regular telephone bills. Service providers do not pay for the right to inform customers and, in fact, France Télécom reimburses them at the rate of 37 F an hour for participating in the system.[6] This equitable billing procedure, called *le système kiosque*, is the third innovative marketing strategy and is primarily responsible for the high volume of traffic on the 36.15 exchange because it offers maximum convenience to both user and provider. The user does not have to formally subscribe to the services and providers can direct their capital to the creation of increasingly imaginative services.[7] Indeed, the role of *le système kiosque* as the decisive factor in the outstanding growth of *la télématique française* is succinctly described by Catherine Bertho, who says that "il est bien probable que l'adoption de ce mode de facturation, qui est l'une des grandes différences entre le système français et ses homologues étrangers, a été décisive dans le succès du Minitel auprès du grand public."[8]

By May 1987, *le kiosque* accounted for 60% of customer calls made on the entire Télétel system, and France Télécom paid service providers 822 million francs in total for the year 1986.[9]

A fourth and final innovation is worthy of mention here. User rates for the entire Télétel system are a function of connection time only, not of distance. Callers are therefore not penalized for contacting services anywhere in France and this feature has given the system a universality and customer appeal lacking in the regionally- oriented British and German networks.[10]

Having discussed the development and organization of Minitel and Télétel, I would now like to describe some of the services which have proven attractive and useful to the general public. No list can be complete, however, since new services are added daily. The services are of two basic types, passive and interactive. Passive services are discrete "packets" of information which appear on the screen when Minitel users follow the correct series of computerized commands. Seen in this way, the terminal is primarily a means of consultation, a source of documentation which subscribers will eventually act upon. All information in *l'annuaire électronique* obviously falls into this category, but users can also view transportation schedules, public service announcements, personal bank account statements, newspaper articles, want ads, schedules for sports and leisure activities, health care advice, department store and supermarket sales, etc. Service providers advertise their special codes in the media and in mailings. Télétel is also interactive, meaning that users can "dialogue" with many services by acting upon or manipulating information appearing on the screen. Thus they can make train, plane or bus reservations, rent a car, plan a trip, transfer money from one account to another, place catalogue orders of various kinds, receive personalized advice -- all without leaving the confines of home or office.

The most popular interactive features of Télétel are the message services, the so-called *messageries*, which allow users to correspond with each other in delayed time through electronic mailboxes or in real time from terminal to terminal.[11]

The ability to send and receive messages anonymously through the use of personal codes has given rise to *les messageries roses*, or sexually explicit communications, which have brought as much notoriety as they have consumer traffic to Télétel.[12] I will discuss the importance of *les messageries roses* later in this presentation, when I assess the potential social implications of Minitel and Télétel.

By expanding electronic communications in France both qualitatively and quantitatively, Minitel and Télétel have enriched the vocabulary normally associated with the telephone and have introduced new and important procedures for interpersonal (and impersonal) contact. As French teachers, we ought to recognize the language learning value of Minitel and Télétel and incorporate them into our lessons on telephone usage. The major problem which arises when we try to familiarize students with Minitel is that it is not possible to bring the actual terminal into the classroom and, even if this were feasible, the machine would not be functional, since the Télétel system cannot be activated in the United States.[13] Nevertheless, the printed instructions for using Minitel and Télétel offer a wealth of pertinent vocabulary which complements that of telephone usage -- vocabulary that is becoming as essential for everyday communication in France as that of the telephone. In addition, the procedures for using the Minitel enable language teachers to introduce their students to valuable language-related activities (such as giving commands, correct completion of fixed logical patterns, question/answer sequences, and culturally-oriented textual analysis). Is such instruction worthwhile? I sincerely believe that it is for several reasons:

1. As we have seen, a significant part of la télématique française is oriented toward the general public, and its potential to affect daily life in France is considerable.

2. The Télétel system will soon be available everywhere in France, and this presents interesting possibilities for widespread use in a country with such a highly centralized administrative structure.

3. Minitel and Télétel are the most visible aspects of a technological evolution which has been unfolding in France for several years and which, driven by government objectives and by the European trade realignments promised after 1992, will continue to transform the country. It is important for students of French to understand that France is a country in transition and not the static or anachronistic society often depicted in their textbooks.

Since Minitel and Télétel are most properly considered as extensions of the telephone system, activities related to them should be interactive, and teamwork in the classroom is therefore ideal. I have identified seven types of team-oriented activities which may interest you and your students. Activities of the type described below can be tailored to fit the language background of the classes in which they are being used. Some procedures are obviously more important for lower level courses, while others could be adapted for use on the advanced level. In any case, individual instructors will be the best judges of the language mastery and cultural understanding necessary for each activity. Prior to initiating any of the seven activities to be discussed below, the instructor would distribute copies of materials normally given to new Minitel subscribers and which are in your handout pack. The instructor would then review the document(s) pertinent to the activity to be undertaken, pointing out new vocabulary and emphasizing important procedures.

The seven activities are:

1. Demonstrations. The class is divided into pairs or small groups, and students in each group take turns demonstrating how to install the terminal, how to use the function keys, how to call a Télétel service. This could take the form of a role play in which one student is a France Télécom employee and the others are new Minitel subscribers who ask questions or request clarifications.

2. Problem Solving. Each student in a group states a problem encountered in using the Minitel terminal and invites appropriate solutions from the others. A student says, for example, "L'écran n'est pas allumé," and someone asks "Avez-vous vérifié le branchement électrique?" Another student says "J'ai besoin d'assistance," and a team member suggests "Appuyez sur la touche GUIDE." The possibilities here are almost endless, and students could use visuals or even props to illustrate the procedures they suggest.

3. Seeking Data. One unusual feature of l'annuaire électronique is that users need enter only partial information to retrieve complete data concerning the person or organization they wish to contact. Using as guides selected pages from a French telephone directory and printed instructions (both included in your handout pack), students within a group act out various methods of searching for their "target." As a preliminary step, students practice accessing the first page of l'annuaire électronique which is called la page d'accueil de service. Here are two question and answer sequences to serve as models:

   Recherche par le nom: Monsieur B recherche le numéro de téléphone d'une personne qu'il a rencontrée dans un café. Il ne se rappelle que le nom, la ville, et la rue du domicile de la personne.

   A: Quel est le nom de l'abonné(e) que vous cherchez?

B: Il s'appelle FAURE.

A: Alors, tapez son nom et appuyez deux fois sur la touche SUITE. Dans quelle localité habite-t-il?

B: Il habite à Chamalières.

A: Bon. Tapez le nom de la localité. Savez-vous son adresse?

B: Pas toute l'adresse, mais je sais qu'il habite dans la rue Belleville.

A: Cela suffit. Appuyez deux fois sur la touche SUITE, tapez le nom de la rue, et appuyez sur la touche ENVOI. Vous voyez maintenant une liste de tous les abonnés nommés FAURE à Chamalières. Il n'y a qu'un seul Monsieur Faure qui habite dans la rue Belleville.

B: Ah! C'est bien lui!
FAURE, Raymond 20, rue Belleville
73.35.56.74

Recherche par rubrique: Madame Y recherche le numéro de téléphone de l'agence Ford à Lezoux.

X: Quel est le commerce que vous cherchez?

Y: C'est le Garage Masse.

X: Bon. Appuyez une fois sur la touche SUITE et tapez la rubrique "garage d'automobiles." Dans quelle localité se trouve ce commerce?

Y: A Lezoux.

X: Alors, tapez une fois sur la touche SUITE et tapez ensuite le nom de la localité. Savez-vous le nom du département?

Y: Bien sûr, c'est le Puy-de-Dôme.

X: Très bien. Appuyez une fois sur la touche SUITE, tapez le nom du département, et appuyez sur la touche ENVOI.

Y: Quel petit miracle! L'agence que je veux est à la liste proposée!
MASSE, Jean garage Ford
agent Croix Chadeyras
73.73.03.78.

4. Communicating with a Service. Le Guide du Minitel is a paperback directory of service providers. It gives the name of the service, a description of the product/service offered, the name of the provider and the access code. Minitel Magazine, a publication especially for Minitel users, provides similar information in its monthly issue. Each group in the class is assigned one service provider chosen from le Guide du Minitel or Minitel Magazine. For example, students might choose Nouvelles Frontières, a well-known French travel agency, and then work together to formulate questions they want to ask Nouvelles Frontières. Sample entries from le Guide and Minitel Magazine, including the one for Nouvelles Frontières, are included in your handout pack. The list of 200 services essentiels contained in le Guide du Minitel is an especially rich source of material for this activity because a detailed description is given for each service on the list. As an example, the description of SIDATEL (3615) includes questions concerning AIDS which students can use as models for their own questions.

5. Creating a Service: Groups exchange the lists of questions prepared during the previous activity and use

each list to design the type of message which would appear on the Minitel screen. Members of each group then read the questions and the resulting messages aloud.

6. Message Transmission via the "Electronic Mailbox": Each student within a group composes a message which he/she wants to leave in a friend's electronic mailbox. Messages are exchanged among the groups and answered. Students then take turns reading message and response sequences aloud.

7. Conversation and Discussion: Le Guide du Minitel and Minitel Magazine categorize services under a number of topic headings, including education, banking and finance, law, health, sports and leisure, etc. New vocabulary found in the description of each service could be isolated and explained in French. Cultural implications of this vocabulary could also be emphasized. For example, analysis of services covered under the heading Réservation should give rise to discussions about the various means of travel available in France and the relative importance of each. Students could then use new vocabulary in conversations. Word families are especially important in this type of activity. For example, the word règlement suggests régler; remboursement leads to rembourser, etc. The work students have done in Activity 4 (Communicating with a Service) would be an excellent basis for conversation and discussion.

The activities I have proposed above offer students the chance to use a wide range of authentic vocabulary in culturally accurate contexts. Instructor imagination is the key to success here, and I hope you will take the time to design your own lessons based on my suggestions and on the printed material in your handout pack.

Now that I have traced the development of Minitel and Télétel and have shown how they may serve as language-learning tools, I would like to discuss their potential impact on French society. We have already seen that, in purely quantitative terms, la télématique has been very successful in France. More than three and a half million terminals have already been given out, and telephone customers are requesting units at a rate of 80,000 to 100,000 a month. Non-professional use has leveled off at seventy percent of all units in service, while the business sector accounts for the other thirty percent. Minitélistes use their terminals an average of about eight minutes per month.

However, the popular acceptance of Minitel and Télétel has been endangered by two phenomena which are worthy of note here. Jacqueline de Linares describes the first by underscoring the essential flaw in the original marketing and publicity efforts aimed at the general public:

> Menée tambour battant, selon une tradition technocratique bien française après des expérimentations limitées, la mise en oeuvre de l'opération télématique domestique avait omis l'essentiel: analyser en profondeur les besoins du grand public pour savoir ce que feraient les Français munis de leur terminal vidéotex.[14]

What French *minitélistes* did do, beginning as early as the experimental period in Vélizy in 1981 and 1982, was to exploit the Minitel's potential for amusement, and things quickly got out of hand.[15] Paying by the minute to play video games was bad enough in the opinion of the more sober-minded, but the instant success of *les messageries roses* or *messageries conviviales* set the world to clucking about French decadence and gave the Minitel a reputation - in France and abroad - as a mere toy for the erotic-minded.[16] The French government, invoking the citizen's right to privacy and to personal freedom, adamantly refused to impose any type of control on *les messageries roses*,[17] but two forces have begun to bring equilibrium to *le kiosque*. The first is a sort of "sticker shock," which has had a sobering effect on customers who forgot that, sooner or later, the piper would have to be paid. While there still are Minitel addicts, they are becoming a distinct minority, and *minitélistes* have begun to make more prudent use of Télétel 3.[18] Service providers themselves are the second source of constraint on the "Wild West" atmosphere of *le kiosque*. Somewhat belatedly, they have come to the conclusion that quality and variety are the best weapons in the battle to insure the integrity and heightened profitability of Télétel 3. Indeed, many observers feel that *le kiosque* will reach its full potential only when the influence and notoriety of *les messageries roses* diminish.[19] Martine Azoulai concludes that "l'équivalent 36.15 = sexe a rendu quelques services non-négligeables, comme la banalisation de la télématique dans le grand public. Mais, pour être réellement pris au sérieux, le Minitel doit aussi faire savoir qu'il a d'autres usages, convenables sous tous rapports."[20]

The second phenomenon which seemed to endanger a more widespread acceptance of Minitel and Télétel by non-commercial users is what might be called the "cupboard syndrome," and it simply means that a significant number of Minitel terminals (perhaps as many as forty percent of the total distributed) are going unused by those who opted to take them home.[21] While several reasons for subscriber apathy come readily to mind (telephone bills inflated by Télétel connection time, indignation over les messageries roses, imprecise or incomplete marketing research by France Télécom at an earlier period), a more basic problem seems to be that minitélistes habitually undervalue important services offered or are simply unaware of their existence. As early as 1985, a survey conducted by l'Association Française de Télématique revealed that 50% of the 1,078 persons questioned claimed that they had insufficient information and 60% said they had no information at all concerning the services available.[22]

In the face of customer apathy and excesses on le kiosque, both France Télécom and the service providers have begun to develop more precise marketing strategies for the 36.15 exchange. As a first step, France Télécom has begun to attract additional advertising to l'annuaire électronique.[23] I feel that this is important, both because subscribers will have added reason to use their Minitel and because the ads will refer them to services on the 36.15 and other Télétel access numbers. The French telecommunications agency is also encouraging service providers to band together and to adopt the aggressive advertising methods of les messageries roses, a sort of call to "fight fire with fire."[24] Finally, France Télécom may soon stop its free distribution of the basic Minitel terminal. A monthly rental fee or user tax on the unit may reduce its appeal as a mere gadget and keep it from those who have no intention of using it regularly.[25]

For their part, service providers had already begun to make demands on France Télécom as early as 1985, most notably with regard to the rate structure of le kiosque. They felt that a rate hierarchy determined according to the importance of the service offered would attract more worthwhile services to le kiosque, thus diversifying the clientele and providing competition for les messageries roses. Their lobbying efforts resulted in the inauguration of a tiered rate structure in 1987.[26] It is also important to note that advertising agencies specializing in the restricted format of Minitel are becoming adept at helping service providers make optimum use of the videotex screen.[27]

All in all, Minitel and Télétel seem to have come through the worst of the turbulence and even profited from the unpleasant ride. By May, 1987, *les messageries* had fallen slightly behind both *l'annuaire électronique* and other forms of recreational use in total traffic on the 36.15, and statistics suggest that their notoriety far outstrips their actual importance among *minitélistes*.[28] Moreover, customer demand has leveled off at between 80,000 and 100,000 units per month, causing France Télécom to invest even more heavily in new commercial and professional markets for more advanced spinoffs of the basic terminal.[29] My own feeling is that Minitel and Télétel will endure and prosper in the non-commercial (popular) market for several reasons:

1. Minitel and Télétel are exceedingly handy and their interactive features are practical and time saving.

2. Public reaction to innovation is not always predictable and may at first take the form of apathy or even rejection. The telephone, the automobile and the airplane were all scorned by at least a part of the population as unnecessary gadgets in the beginning.

3. The centralized structure of French bureaucracy must not be underestimated in the story of *la télématique française*. Possibilities for user access to state-run agencies are almost endless. Already students may register for *lycée* and university courses by Minitel, and services are now available to help students prepare for the inevitable nationalized exams.[30] In the end, Minitel and Télétel may play a significant role in lightening the traditional bureaucratic burden of the French.

As a conclusion, I would like to make several predictions concerning the impact of *la télématique populaire* on life in France:

1. Despite present claims to the contrary, the P. et T. will eventually abandon its paper telephone directory in favor of the less costly and more easily updated electronic one, thus ensuring almost universal distribution of Minitel and guaranteeing at least a modicum of connection time for most subscribers. This is probably wiser than penalizing those who opt for the unit by charging them a rental fee. Signs of this evolution are already visible. Minitel units are now available in many post offices and Minitel booths have

begun to appear in certain cities.[31] It is worth noting, too, that paper directories have all but disappeared from public telephone booths.

2. Gradual phasing out of the paper directory will also have sociological implications, because it will put pressure on the older generations to embrace the new technology and thus narrow the gap between those who have mastered its use and those who have not. We saw a similar progression as the telephone penetrated ever deeper into everyday life in Western countries.

3. Minitel and Télétel will be yet another impetus (along with the rapid evolution of French television) in the growing popularity of non print-based media in France. This conclusion may at first seem contradictory, since communication by Minitel is based on electronic transmission of the printed word, but the value of that printed word has been altered, even deformed. Devoid of style and enhanced by clever graphics, it is ephemeral, subject to manipulation at will, and bent to entirely pragmatic ends. It is also carefully targeted, crisp and direct. Are these not the failings and strengths of television in a nutshell?

4. Minitel and Télétel will have a favorable effect on the economic and cultural unification of Europe due to begin in 1992. Plans are well under way to link Spain and Germany to French Télétel, and I believe other E.E.C. countries will join the system - Europe's most successful to date - by the end of this century.[32] Aside from the professional and commercial advantages of such a network, it will help to make the "new Europe" a reality for the ordinary person by permitting immediate access to a truly European data bank. We are, of course, left to wonder what the linguistic implications of a pan-European communications network will be.

However predictable or unpredictable their future may be, Minitel and Télétel, born in the late 1970's, enfants terribles of the early 1980's, and chastened young adults of today and tomorrow, are here to stay. For us as French teachers, Minitel and Télétel present yet another opportunity to familiarize our students with technological progress in France while adding to the linguistic competence they will need to integrate successfully into contemporary French society.

Notes

[1] "Télétel," France Télécom brochure; undated and unpaginated.

[2] Catherine Bertho, "l'Irrésistible Ascension du Minitel," l'Histoire, 104 (octobre 1987), 92-94.

[3] As of August, 1988, les zones émeraudes seemed to cover most of France.

[4] France Télécom printed information; undated and unpaginated.

[5] "Le Minitel pourrait ne plus être distribué gratuitement," les Echos, 15.084 (24 février 1988), 6.

[6] France Télécom printed information; undated and unpaginated.

[7] Bertho, 94.

[8] Bertho, 94.

[9] Isabelle Durieux, "le Boom du Minitel," la Vie française, 2189 (25-31 mai 1987), 32.

[10] Bertho, 94.

[11] Les messageries are grouped under Télétel 3 or 36.15, as described above. Subscribers use Télétel 5 (36.18) to communicate from terminal to terminal directly.

[12] Jacqueline de Linares, "Minitel, un jouet de six milliards," le Nouvel Economiste, 537 (18 avril 1986), 50.

[13] See "le Minitel entre aux USA sur la pointe des pieds," les Echos, 15.142 (26 mai 1988), 8. The American telecommunications company US West has signed an agreement with France Télécom to install a limited Télétel system on a trial basis in the United States. The experiment will be confined to one city, however, and will be essentially limited to distribution of the terminals and billing for time used. US West is prohibited by law from providing its own data bases. A recent mailing from MinitelNET Inc., of New York City offers a subscription service to the French Télétel network to residents of the United States. Subscribers can buy or rent the Minitel terminal or use a

special modem and Minitel emulation software with their personal computer. Subscription fees are probably too high for most classroom teachers.

[14] de Linares, 53.

[15] Durieux, 32.

[16] de Linares, 50, 52. By early 1986, 60% of all calls on the 36.15 (Télétel 3) were directed to les messageries and to game programs, a total of 42% of all Minitel traffic, excluding the use of l'annuaire électronique.

[17] Gérard Longuet, Minister of les Postes et Télécommunications until May, 1988, expressed strong opposition to government censure of Télétel 3. See "la Télématique fait le tri parmi les siens," Stratégies, 563 (25-31 mai), 8.

[18] Gérard Petitjean, "la Défonce en Minitel," le Nouvel Observateur (11-17 août 1986), 89.

[19] Martine Azoulai, "France Télécom lave plus blanc," Télématique Magazine, 22 (juin 1988), 60.

[20] Azoulai, 60.

[21] Fabien Gruhier, "'87, l'Année du Minitel," le Nouvel Observateur, 1156 (2-8 janvier 1987), 58.

[22] "Mais qui sont les utilisateurs du Minitel?," Libre Service Actualités, 1024 (2 mai 1986), 155.

[23] Isabelle Carrel, "le Onze, un sacré numéro," Télématique Magazine, 22 (juin 1988), 56.

[24] Azoulai, 60.

[25] les Échos, 24 février 1988, 6.

[26] Durieux, 33.

[27] Martine Azoulai, "le Minitel décoiffe les habitudes," Télématique Magazine, 22 (juin 1988), 57-60.

[28] Durieux, 32.

[29] Jean-Pierre Jolivet, "la Nouvelle Donne du Minitel," l'Usine moderne, 9 (3 mars 1988), 29.

[30] Véronique Prévost, "la Boîte à bachot," Télématique Magazine, 22 (juin 1988), 36-37. See also "Universités et lycées: les inscriptions par Minitel," le Figaro (18 mai 1988), 16.

[31] Nicole Géraudie, "le Minitel au coin de la rue," les Echos, 14.815 (4 février 1987), 31.

[32] See les Echos, 15.142 (26 mai 1988), 8, and "Accord franco-espagnol d'harmonisation des réseaux," le Figaro (18 mai 1988), 16.

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USE OF RADIO PLAYS AND VIDEO TAPES IN INTERMEDIATE FRENCH AND GERMAN CLASSES

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The aim is to increase students' motivation for studying French and German by exposing them to the foreign culture and society through audio and video cassettes. Preparation is essentially the same for both kinds of tapes, except that with the visual aspect absent from audio tapes, students have to use their own imaginations to visualize the action, which is like listening to a play behind a closed door. When they are interested in what they see and hear, they are willing to work harder in order to build up the vocabulary necessary to understand and communicate content in simple language. As a result, their listening, speaking, and writing skills increase considerably faster than if they had been exposed to the language only by reading books. It is also evident that audio-visual comprehension of the foreign culture and language is a more effective teaching tool in our time than reading foreign language texts. We must not forget that at the end of the twentieth century people read few books but learn what they choose from the mass media, particularly television, and that educational television is a legitimate and essential part of the educational system.

For foreign language teachers the question is why do we not make more use of the TV screen in our classes, except for advanced students? To these students we have shown French and German films for years because we conducted the classes in the original languages. There is no communication problem because students are able to function in the language, films or audio tapes are discussed as are grammar and idioms, and there is also role playing.

The situation is quite different in intermediate foreign language classes. Without extensive preparation, students have to view foreign films or video tapes with subtitles in English and are frustrated because they lack sufficient comprehension skills. Numerous questions and discussions have to take place in very simple terms or English. In other words, it is primarily a visual experience, that often takes place in France or Germany, with an English translation.

Much work has to be done to prepare the students for an audio or video cassette in a foreign language without translation. First, we have to get permission from the copyright holder to make a copy of the film, which may or may not be easy. With this accomplished, we can then proceed with our preparations.

I find that the following method has worked:

1. An audio and a video tape have to be made.

2. The teacher has to prepare a vocabulary list and notes to explain idioms and grammar. The vocabulary list contains only words above the approximately 700 - 900 words on the word frequency lists commonly learned in basic language courses and expected to be known by the student at the beginning of the intermediate course. If necessary, these words can be reviewed.

Please note that the text of some audio and video materials is available in print. The students are asked to write vocabulary lists and to study them.

In a few cases, audio tapes are graded, edited and published for class use, such as "Voix et Silences" and "Mensch und Zeit", both edited by myself, with introductions, vocabulary and footnotes.

Available also are films on video tape made specifically for language teaching, with accompanying text books or study guides.

3. When tapes are not prepared for student use, the teacher has to provide an audio tape of the vocabulary over the first 700 words in the high frequency lists.

4. Students study the vocabulary and accompanying audio tape of the vocabulary.

5. An audio tape, read slowly by one speaker, in sections of two or three words, with pauses for repetition, has to be made and put on reserve in the language laboratory for student use. During the pauses, the student has to repeat orally and/or in writing, what he hears.

6. Subsequently, students listen to the original tape, which can be stopped and started again (by pushing the pause button and the pause button release) at short intervals. These pauses allow them to repeat orally or in writing what they have just heard.

It is a good idea to provide a transcript of the video tape so that students can correct mistakes and add what they have missed.

Finally, they hear and understand the audio cassette as it is. Discussion of the audio cassette and role-playing follow. The teacher may encourage other versions of some topics.

7. Students see and understand the whole video cassette.

8. Extensive discussion of the film on video, including non-verbal language.

9. The proof that the student has fully understood the tape is to ask him if he has. I do not doubt that seeing and hearing is the best way to learn a foreign language. Are they not also the way we learned our native tongue?

Students' Evaluation.

1. They liked the variety of speakers, people of all ages and from all parts of France and Germany, with various social backgrounds. Difficult for them were familiar expressions and some points of grammar that had to be explained.

2. They were glad to discuss in their own words what they had observed.

3. They wanted to learn more history, philosophy and geography in order to understand the life and times projected in the film. Foods, lifestyles, education were also discussed.

4. Differences and similarities between societies were debated.

5. Observations of generational conflict brought about considerable debate.

6. Non-verbal language, such as proxemics, kinetics, and body language brought about considerable debates. Most students had not been acquainted with non-verbal language at all and became very interested about the meaning of some gestures. Another focal point was youth culture.

Over-all Impression

The over-all impression is that discussions were much more vivid with video films than with books, and students contributed interesting observations for discussion on their own and without solicitation from the teacher.

It was also arranged for students to meet together, without the teacher, to continue their discussions outside of class. In this case, the most advanced students served as discussion leaders, but there were also disagreements and occasional rivalry; individuals enjoyed the challenge - akin to the competition to gain mastery in sports - to understand a film in a foreign language and discuss it in that language. It requires an effort to learn it. There is the question of whether they wish to do it. If they are motivated, they will study the vocabulary list that they must know before they see the film and they will also listen to the tapes several times to improve their pronunciation and get ready for the discussions. Some learn how to imitate certain actors very well and memorize key sentences to impress their peers with play-acting or even putting on a brief play of their own based on the film.

However, most individuals are not theatrically inclined and at first become the audience.But even some students who are timid at the beginning provide some entertaining contributions after a while. Occasionally there is a memorable gesture learned from the film. Once the natural impulse to play games becomes active, students are fast to improve in inventiveness and imagination as well as in ability to express themselves in the foreign language. They enjoy their progress and do not mind working harder.

Nevertheless, there will always be some less successful students and some prolonged silences in the debates. To avoid an embarrassing silence in class or too much merriment about a speaker who cannot think of the right word in French or German, the teacher has to show the student how to talk around it. One student, for example, did not know the word for ladder. Instead, he said that you use the object for picking apples or other fruit from trees. When he says this in French, it is perfectly acceptable. This method can even add amusement to a serious class hour. We can make the search for a word look like a puzzle or a mystery story and involve the whole class in the search. Offer a choice of questions: Is it an object or a person, an idea or an activity, a place or a moment in time? Where in the film is there another reference to the same object? It is a way to solicit everybody's participation. After various definitions it becomes clear how the puzzle can be solved.

As far as teaching content is concerned, there is no equivalent to the authentic, living foreign culture of video film. I have seen students enthusiastic and excited when they viewed a performance of a Cocteau film or Molière play, performed by the Comédie Française or watched a documentary about student life in Paris. This brings foreign culture into our classroom, visible to everyone. Excitement can be added by letting students replay an event they have just seen. There is no limit to what we can do to solicit additional readings and assignments on topics suggested by video films with content and form of high quality.

Films are also interesting from the viewpoint of the filmmaker's art. How does a filmmaker - Cocteau, for instance - shape script and photography into his specific artistic construct?

We can evidently learn a great deal from video cassettes about France, its people, geography, history, politics and - very much - cinematography. Coincidentally, we also learn a great deal about human beings in general and immerse ourselves for a while in the French or German language and civilization. The Chinese are right, "a picture is worth a thousand words."

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING: ONE FACULTY'S EXPERIENCE

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Like all universities, we have each fall the task of placing new students with previous study of French (more than 400 of them in our case) in an appropriate French course. New students can be placed in one of four different courses, numbered 501, Review of French, 503, Intermediate French, 504, Advanced Intermediate French, and 631, French Grammar and Speech. We once used scores on the CEEB Achievement Test in French as our primary placement instrument, but in recent years fewer and fewer students have been presenting achievement-test scores at entrance and so we had been obliged to place students on the basis of number of years of previous study. This proved to be less than satisfactory, given the diversity of secondary-school programs in French. Consequently, in the spring of 1985, a group of colleagues put together a multiple-choice test consisting of 96 items of grammar with a few vocabulary items, and that test was administered in the four courses mentioned above on the second day of classes in the fall semester of 1985.

After administering the first version of the test twice, in the fall of 1985 and that of 1986, we decided to ask a colleague in our Department of Education who specializes in testing instruments to run a series of analyses on our test and to recommend appropiate changes. We also decided that, beginning the following fall, we would administer the test at the beginning and end of each semester (the four courses in which the test is given are offered in both semesters). On the recommendation of our statistical specialist, we reduced the total number of items on the test from 96 to 80, so that all students would have a reasonable chance of finishing the test; and we added oral-comprehension and reading-comprehension sections to the exam. Moreover, we added a few questions concerning background in French in order to have a profile of the students registered in our courses. The test was revised a second time for this fall semester, by adding items to both the oral and reading comprehension sections and reducing correspondingly the number of grammatical items.

The background questions yielded some unexpected results.

We learned, for instance, that fully 66% of students enrolling for 501 had had more than the two years of secondary-school French which we thought prepared adequately for the course. Many, however, (all but 7%) had had some interruption in their study of the language. For 39% of those students, the interruption had been greater than two years. Students, then, were probably well advised to try the lowest of the post-elementary courses.

Another interesting finding was that 50% of students enrolling in 503 had four years or more of previous study and no interruption of study. Clearly, they did not believe us when we said that three years were adequate preparation for the course, and, in many cases, they were right.

The most surprising and gratifying statistic of all was that, except in 501, most students were not taking our courses to meet requirements, but because they expected to enjoy them! They were given the choice under "Reasons for taking the course" of "foreign-language requirement," "general-education requirement," "major," "minor," or "other." "Other" was the most common response, although "minor" was an increasingly popular reason, the more advanced the student.

More students than we had thought at least began the semester thinking that they certainly or probably would take further French courses. In 501, the figure was 43%; in 503, 63%; in 504, 88%; and in 631, 93%. Moreover, the question on degree of interest elicited a more positive response than we had anticipated.

The studies done by our statistical expert on the data we had collected yielded other interesting and, in some cases, surprising information. Our decision to administer the test at the beginning and at the end of each semester, in which we had been encouraged by our colleague in Education, gave us valuable information on what kind of progress our students were making in our courses. Below, in Table 1, are a comparison of range of raw scores and mean raw scores in each of four courses at the four times last year when the tests were administered:

TABLE 1

COURSE	SEPTEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	MAY
FREN 501				
Range	3 - 73	30 - 64	16 - 55	23 - 64
Mean	31.4	46.3	30.2	44.1

TABLE 1 (cont.)

COURSE	SEPTEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	MAY
FREN 503				
Range	18 - 70	35 - 78	xxxx	20 - 75
Mean	45.8	54.1	47.8	49.7
FREN 504				
Range	37 - 74	47 - 75	xxxx	50 - 75
Mean	54.1	62.5	55.8	60.7
FREN 631				
Range	44 - 73	56 - 79	xxxx	54 - 80
Mean	59.6	69.3	61.4	66.4

We were intrigued to see how closely the mean score attained in December in one course matched the previous September's score in the next higher course. That seemed to indicate that the standards we had adopted for placement were accurate, but we also worried that we were "teaching to the test." Our statistician assured us that this result was a positive one in the sense that the test reflected those points which we considered essential and that we were actually teaching those points effectively in our courses. We were not surprised to learn that there is no clear relationship between score on the diagnostic test and final grade in the course, given that a large component of any final grade depends on regularity of work and on motivation. We *were* rather surprised, however, when we were told that addition of oral and reading comprehension sections did not appear to increase the reliability of the test as a predictor of success. We had assumed for years that new students in our courses were hard to teach because of diversity of preparation, some of them having almost totally neglected oral ability in their secondary-school French program and others having neglected reading. The diagnostic test did not seem to bear this out, however; students tended to perform at about the same level in all sections of the test, which suggests that no skill is totally neglected in secondary-school programs and also that all skills develop at a similar rate even though one of them may be emphasized in a given academic program.

To turn now to what can be learned by analysis of particular items on the test, I have chosen two questions each from the oral-comprehension and reading-comprehension sections of the test, and three from the grammar section. Before presenting Table 2, which is the analysis we receive on each item, I will give brief explanations of column headings:

BIS.R	Biserial Correlation Coefficient, a figure indicating the relationship between the average total raw score of those passing the item and those failing it. A negative number indicates that the question does not serve to predict success!
DIFF	Difficulty, on a scale from 0 to 20.
MN P	The average total score of those selecting the correct answer to this item.
MN F	The average total score of those not selecting the correct answer.
PCTP	The percentage of those attempting the item who chose the correct answer.

TABLE 2

Qu'est-ce qui arrive?
a.C'est très beau. b.C'est un accident.
c.C'est mon ami. d.Il arrive en retard.

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	0.10	17.0	30.4	28.2	3.8	3	7	55	120	5
503	0.53	13.5	50.8	40.0	19.1	3	34	91	50	3
504	0.67	11.1	58.7	48.4	38.8	3	19	24	3	0
631	0.40	10.5	62.8	56.9	44.7	0	21	21	5	0

There are, obviously, two elements which must be recognized in order to come up with the correct answer. One is that "qu'est-ce qui" refers only to things; the other is the idiomatic use of the verb "arriver." Answers a. and d. are unresponsive--a fact which even students with minimal preparation recognize in the case of a. but not in the case of d., where the repetition of "arrive" seems to lead into error. The person/thing distinction, however, causes more hesitation; even in 631, students are evenly split between b., the correct answer, and c., which would be possible if "qu'est-ce qui" could refer to persons.

The question shown in Table 3 presents a similar problem and, in addition, has a phonetic-discrimination component which misleads:

TABLE 3

Qu'est-ce que tu attends?
a.De la musique. b.Mes parents.
c.L'arrivée de Jean. d.Ma petite amie.

TABLE 3 (cont.)

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	0.57	12.6	35.1	26.0	25.5	84	31	47	22	6
503	0.33	9.9	45.0	38.9	51.1	68	8	92	12	1
504	0.66	8.9	56.4	46.2	61.2	14	2	30	3	0
631	0.15	6.5	60.0	57.6	80.9	7	0	38	2	0

It is interesting to note that the person/thing distinction proves less confusing here than in the previous table. This probably means that "qu'est-ce que," the direct-object interrogative pronoun referring to things, is taught sooner than "qu'est-ce qui," the subject form. It may also be that "qui" interrogative is so firmly associated in students' minds with persons that its presence at the end of "qu'est-ce qui" is highly misleading. Whatever, the explanation may be, it is clear from Table 3 that answers b. and d., which refer to persons, command relatively little allegiance, even at the 501 level. Answer a., however, avoiding which depends on recognizing that the verb of the cue is not "entends/hear" but "attends/wait for," confuses many up to the level of 504.

Table 4 is, to my mind, particularly interesting as an indication of what needs to be taught again to new students:

TABLE 4

Nous sommes en retard mais ... n'a pas d'importance.
a.ce b.ce que c.c'est d.cela

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	-0.03	17.0	27.8	28.3	4.3	86	23	68	8	5
503	0.49	13.2	49.8	39.9	21.3	100	14	26	38	3
504	0.61	11.5	58.6	49.1	34.7	25	3	4	17	0
631	0.39	10.5	62.7	57.0	44.7	24	1	1	21	0

Answers b. and c. are way off the mark--a fact which is evident to students except for those whose preparation is minimal. To choose correctly between a. and d. depends on knowing that "ce" the pronoun can be used only as the subject of the verb "to be," and many students, even among those who have studied French for some time, are apparently not aware of that. Clearly, this is a point which needs to be emphasized, perhaps not in 501, the intensive review of first-year French, where even more basic concepts must be relearned, but certainly at the intermediate level.

The question in Table 5 seems valuable in the same fashion, but raises a difficult question of changing usage:

TABLE 5

Elle fait ... bonnes compositions.
a.de b.des c.du d.les

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	-0.03	16.2	27.6	28.3	5.9	11	107	6	64	2
503	0.30	14.9	48.0	41.3	10.6	19	125	1	35	1
504	0.36	13.1	57.0	51.1	41.3	11	33	1	4	0
631	0.30	10.9	62.2	57.7	41.3	19	23	0	4	1

Answer c. is, of course, the worst choice, since it is singular and the noun it modifies is plural. Even beginners, the analysis seems to suggest, can make that distinction accurately. A fair number of students in 501 and 503 choose the inappropriate definite article of answer d. To make the "right" choice between a. and b., however, depends on knowing about an exception which more and more francophones ignore, although grammar books continue to teach it and careful speakers continue to observe it. Perhaps we should not take time to teach that "des" becomes "de" when an adjective precedes the noun if most francophones do not speak that way, particularly since Table 5 suggests that we need to work on the distinction between the definite and indefinite articles.

The results indicated in Table 6 came as a great surprise to us:

TABLE 6

Etes-vous déjà marié? Non, je ne suis ... marié.
a.pas déjà b.pas encore c.plus d.jamais

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	0.09	14.5	29.7	28.1	13.3	94	22	12	36	26
503	0.50	13.2	50.2	40.1	21.3	74	34	4	48	21
504	0.46	12.8	58.2	50.6	24.5	23	12	2	12	0
631	0.41	8.7	61.8	55.8	63.0	9	29	2	6	1

Answers c. and d. are clearly wrong. The fact that a number of students chose d. is probably explained by failure to look carefully at the tense of the verb. It seemed to us, however, that the inappropriateness of answer a. was equally apparent. The only explanation for the popularity of answer a. which we could come up with was the conjecture that many speakers of American English may find "not already" an acceptable response to a question containing "already."

The two samples from the reading-comprehension section of the test are perhaps less useful than those from other sections because large numbers of students failed to complete this section, which was the final one of the test. They are included for the sake of completeness; moreover, despite the partial results, they do tell something about the way students typically attack a reading passage.

The answers to the question in Table 7 suggest how easy it is to be misled by superficial similarities:

TABLE 7

Où habite-t-il?
a.Dans un appartement. b.Près de la ville.
c.Loin de la ville. d.A l'étranger.

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	0.43	11.3	32.7	26.2	37.4	2	61	98	2	27
503	0.74	8.8	48.4	34.6	62.2	0	97	58	1	1
504	0.46	8.0	54.6	47.4	69.4	0	34	15	0	0
631	0.57	6.6	61.4	52.4	80.4	0	37	9	0	1

Students read carefully enough to recognize that answers a. and d. do not at all relate to the content of the passage. In the passage, the speaker says that he lives "pas loin de la ville." Given the obvious negation, it is strange that so many students chose answer c., "loin de la ville," as correct. The mistake was perhaps due to students' failure to recognize the preposition "près de" and to trust their own logical instincts.

Finally, Table 8 is useful perhaps only in illustrating how easy it is to make wrong choices under stress:

TABLE 8

Que veulent les ouvriers?
a.Une semaine de travail plus courte.
b.Une augmentation de salaire.
c.Prendre la retraite à 35 ans.
d.Un syndicat.

TABLE 8 (cont.)

CRSE	BIS.R	DIFF	MN P	MN F	PCTP	A.	B.	C.	D.	OMIT
501	0.68	12.3	37.5	26.7	28.0	28	33	14	25	90
503	0.78	10.0	51.8	37.4	49.6	58	34	5	20	64
504	0.46	9.3	55.6	48.5	57.4	27	12	2	6	2
631	0.72	6.0	61.8	49.9	84.4	38	4	1	2	2

The passage on which the question is based begins: "Les syndicats veulent travailler moins," and there is mention of the 35-hour week. Answer a. is correct, and it is worth noting that, except in 501, it was the most frequently chosen answer. Answer b. misled a significant number, for the passage contains the expression "sans diminution de salaire," which led many to make an erroneous assumption. Answers c. and d. find echos in the passage, but would not be misleading except to those who were scanning the passage rapidly for clues.

We are eagerly awaiting the results of the retake at the end of the semester. There were problems at the beginning of the semester with the administration of the oral part of the test and we hope that if we change that, there will be a greater number of students finishing the exam. The diagnostic test has proved to be an instrument which we can use not only to place students but also to reflect on what we are doing in our courses and how we might change things to facilitate our students' ability to function in French. For that reason, we recommend such a test to other faculties.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE BUSINESS COURSE

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The need to teach public speaking skills and international career development can hardly be overlooked today. Businesspersons need strong communication skills to gather information, describe, explain, sell, and manage in countless commercial and corporate scenarios. A businessperson must also feel comfortable with visibility and formality, professional attire, formal gatherings, and professional conferences. The foreign language student´s need for public speaking skills is just as compelling. Public speaking skills enhance verbal skills in a course that might otherwise tend to focus on reading and writing.

How can we ignore the foreign language student´s need for assistance in international career development? It is simple enough to ascertain this need. Ask any student who speaks dreamily of an international career precisely what that career might be, and most students will have no answer. At best they imagine themselves as employees in as yet unnamed "international corporations." These students clearly want for guidance, and it seems appropriate for the foreign language business course to serve as a forum for the undertaking. Most Career Planning Offices do not have the expertise or numbers to handle this specific area, and without help it proves a vast and difficult field to master. The addition of an international career development component to the foreign language for business course is also compatible with our departmental goals. First, the component is implied in the title of such a course, and , second, we have defended the need for foreign language education for a decade by arguing that students will be better prepared for the international marketplace.

The simultaneous teaching of public speaking and international career development yields a generous fringe benefit. The two dovetail beautifully and increase student motivation enormously. The nature of the business world and career development lend themselves to public speaking, and the combination reinforce the message that students must extend their vision, reach beyond the classroom to prepare for the international marketplace. In the following paragraphs, I will outline units and classroom presentations on public speaking skills international career development, and also emphsize their interrelatedness. Before doing so, however, I would like to share some of the vital statistics of a typical Business

German class at Susquehanna University so that readers may understand the classrooom context of the methodology described.

The Business German course at Susquehanna University is offered every second year and usually numbers ten to twelve students, including freshman, sophmores, juniors, and seniors. Their linguistic experience diverges greatly since some have completed semesters or years abroad. The entire class is conducted in the target language, and the Public Speaking Component is spread throughout the semester. We teach spontaneous as well as prepared speaking in weekly classes devoted to public speaking skills. The Career Development Component begins at the mid-semester and lasts for seven weeks. Career Development is incorporated into the curriculum through conventional communication activities, library research, and speeches.

The distinction between oral reports and public speaking is worth mentioning here because they are certainly not the same. It is true that many foreign language classes include oral reports in their design, but oral reports are not speeches. Oral reports tend to focus on content, rather than on method of presentation. The presentation of oral reports tends to go poorly, and, as has been observed many times, few actually gain from the experience beyond the presenter. This phenomenon can be explained according to some basic rules of communication. The content of the oral report tends to demand writing, which forces the student to read or memorize. Further, the content tends to exceed the lingusitic ability of students. But most importantly, the quantity of the content almost always exceeds what can be communicated effectively. Effective public speaking skills require more time for communication than an equal content read silently or aloud. We simply cannot listen and understand as much as we can read and understand.

Perhaps this also explains why scholars tend to read rather than to speak. Their style is not merely convention inherited from the European Humanistic tradition. The scholarly audience has accustomed itself to a wholesome dose of researched material, the result of months or years of work. But the fruits of such a duration cannot be communicated with effective public speaking skills in the twenty minutes that have become conventional in scholarly conferences. The scholar who wishes to deliver the density of material expected in an effective manner has little choice but to read a consisely written paper, even if enlivened with pauses, rhetorical questions, eye contact, wit, grace, etc.

Isn´t is possible that a variation of our problem in presenting research in twenty minutes, faces students giving oral reports; and aren´t their problems compounded by the fact that public speaking skills are rarely taught in foreign language classes? Such skills are usually limited to communications classes, unfortunate because foreign language classes are generally smaller and offer more opportunity for practice. Shouldn´t stylish communication be the business of the foreign language department? Public speaking skills are simple enough to teach and students enjoy it.

Arriving at a method of teaching these skills could consume more time than most foreign language teachers can spare, and the numerous books available on this topic could fill an entire semester. I hope to spare my colleagues time by presenting a system adapted from the Toastmasters International, an organization that promotes public speaking skills around the world. Their approach is straightforward and simple, and though one could delve deeper into each aspect of a speech, this method more than suffices to launch students into repectable, effective business speeches.

Before students give each speech, usually one week in advance, they receive complete instructions for preparing and delivering the speech. The instuctions listed below appear as students see them on the overhead projector. Naturally, students should read and hear instructions in the target language, but I present them here in English to facilitate use in other foreign languages. In other words, the instructions below need only be translated into the target language onto an overhead projector, and could then be ready for classroom use. It helps to begin by establishing groundrules for speech classes, as follows.

The STRUCTURE of a speech class.

1. Class begins with table topics: one student calls on others at random to resond to questions on a topic of general interest, i.e. the weather, vacations, a current event. Responses are limited to 90 seconds. This training in spontaneous speaking greatly enhances poise and confidence.

2. Three to four students give 5 minute speeches.

3. After each speech, another student evaluates the speech in front of the class. The evaluator is also limited to 90 seconds, again, in order to give practice in spontaneous speaking.

4. Class concludes with a vote for the best table topic speaker and the best speech. Essential for success; greatly enhances motivation of speakers and attention of listeners.

PREPARING the students to speak.

WRITING YOUR SPEECH

1. Choose a topic that can be presented in 5 minutes.

2. Introduce your topic with an interesting or surprising notion. Why should this audience take an interest in this topic. Be sure to tell your audience what they will learn from your speech.

3. Construct a logical flow of information. Lead your audience through you speech by telling them exactly where you are headed, then follow a clear and simple path. You might number your points, or rely on chronological or sequential order. Choose a vivid, concrete example for each point that you make.

4. Conclude your speech. Summarize what you have said. Make sure that your conclusion sounds conclusive.

DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

1. Should you be nervous? Yes, it is natural and will add zest to your speech, and, no, if you practice orally, you should have few problems.

2. Remember the goal of your speech: To communicate and to make a lasting impression, to help your audience remember your message. Therefore...

3. Dress for the occasion. Wear business attire since we are preparing to address a business audience.

4. Keep your body still and quiet. Shifting, leaning, swinging, etc. distracts your audience.

5. Rest your hands on the table or podium, if they shake, or if you don´t know what to do with your hands. When appropriate, use your hands for gestures to emphasize a point or to enhance a rhetorical question.

6. Maintain eye contact randomly with your audience throughout your speech. Use your eyes and facial expressions to maintain contact with your audience.

7. Speak loudly, slowly, naturally, and with conviction. Believe what you say; don´t say anything that you don´t believe.

8. Plan your pauses, rhetorical questions, and gestures.

PREPARING STUDENTS TO EVALUATE A SPEECH

1. How do you evaluate a classmate´s speech?

    a. Gently. We all benefit from criticism, but, after all, we´re only human.

    b. Positively. Begin by recognizing what your classmate did well. What was particularly successful and clever? Then proceed to points on which your classmate could improve a speech the next time.

    c. Thoughtfully. Consider the points that we have focused on. Is the content appropriate for a five minute speech? Is the speech well constructed? Is the introduction interesting? Is the body of the speech logical? Is the conclusion conclusive? Was the speech delivered with proper body posture, eye contact, and vocality?

THE FIRST SPEECHES

(THESE PRECEDE THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT)

1. Introduce yourself! This is a standard first speech for Toastmaster´s International and in communications courses. It is, of course, entirely appropriate for a business person.

2. Sell us something! This is the standard persuasive speech modified to meet the needs of every businessperson.

3. How does it work? This gives students a chance to use visual aids and to explain a mechanism such as a toaster, hairdryer, home computer, etc. We review vocabulary specific to such description in class.

Companion activity to the first speech:

The Business Reception.

After formally introducing themselves to the class, students attended a class business reception. They are each assigned to create their dream business person, from career, to family, to hobbies; and then to play that character during the reception. The object of the exercise is to stay in character, to make small talk, to make contacts, and to remember details about as many other business persons as possible.

The rationale for teaching international career development is just as compelling as that for teachng public speaking. As any career development counselor can tell us, a job search requires a good bit of time, often a full year. It also requires great familiarity with an enormous market, many contacts, and relentness networking. For the average undergraduate, we can increase this time exponentially when students encounter the international job marketplace. Given its enormity, one is justified in questioning the value of such an undertaking if it is to comprise just one part of a course design. Let us agree form the outset that we must establish realistic goals. Certainly, it would be unrealistic to expect that students might find jobs during the semester. A job search requires forty hours a week, and our students have only a fraction of that time to devote. But we can walk them through the process so that it is familiar to them when the time comes to do it on their own. We can also encourage students to focus on specific jobs in specific industries, which again, as any career counselor will tell us, is a first and essential prerequisite to a successful job search.

The steps involved in my career development component are drawn from those commonly recommended in career counseling literature. The aim is to take students through the steps: to choose what they want to do, then to discern where they might fit into the international job market. Again, what is presented here has been adapted to a course and is not intended to delineate an exhaustive job search. This presentation is intended to expediate the efforts of fellow teachers. Yet, we are fortunate that a great deal of literature has recently been published on this subject, and I would like to share this wealth of information and resources. Two articles in particular will bring one close to the frontiers of research in the field. In his exhaustive article, "Overseas Employment: How to Develop Your Own International Employment Service," Frank Klein provides an "International Employment Service Resource Library" that includes sections on U.S. practical training resources, and resources for short-term and long-term overseas opportunities. His invaluable "library," which includes the titles of organizations and all manner of printed matter (like books on overseas employment with extensive bibliographies of their own), cannot help but capture the imagination. Patricia Rutledge offers another listing of resources in her artice, "Foreign Languages: A Passport To Your Career," that includes additional associations, employers, and schools. A wonderful way to stay on top of the literature in international career development is to make contact with career counselors. Let them know of your concerns and they will keep you in mind as they peruse their literature.

The following are the steps that we follow in our business course, beginning at the mid-semester. Again, I present this in English.

TEACHING INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE FL BUSINESS COURSE

1. Choose a DIRECTION for yourself. Students work together in pairs in an interviewed styled language activity. After listening to each other they describe each other's aspirations.

    a. What do I like to do?

    b. What am I good at?

    c. What will make my work meaningful?

2. BRAINSTORM on careers in the following areas:

    Manufacturing
    Marketing and Advertising
    Travel
    Transportation
    Agriculture
    Geology
    Health Care
    Governnment
    Environment
    Mass Media
    Entertainment
    Public Service

    This activity usually graduates from a short presentation by myself, to pairs, to group presentation.

3. SIFT OUT careers from this list for international potential.

    Lends itself to large group discussion.

4. CHOOSE a potentially international career for yourself for semester-long focus.

    Clearly individual work for class presentation or essay. Lends itself to group brainstorming on planning activites, clubs, summer employment, etc. to direct students toward those fields.

5. CONDUCT an information interview.

   Clearly an out-of-class assignment to write up, but lends itself to class discussion.

6. DELIVER a speech on your "chosen" career. "Why I chose to become a ____________."

7. CONDUCT library research on potential employers.

   I usually schedule two class sessions to spend in the library with students. Units begin with presentation by reference librarian. Students must research three potential employers.

8. PREPARE and PERFORM mock job interviews.

   Students work in pairs and are matched for interest to the extent possible. Each has a separate preparation, either as candidate or employer. The two perform the unrehearsed job interview before the class which then evaluates both performances.

9. DELIVER final speech: ten minutes.

   "Hello. My name is _________, and I represent (name of company or organization).

Companion activity to Career Development Component:

A business trip to a local (if possible) multi-national firm.

There is a surprising fringe benefit to teaching public speaking skills on a topic as gripping as international careers, namely, that public speaking skills transcend linguistic skills to a large degree. Students who deliver clear, well-organized speeches are more successful than than those who do not, regardless of linguistic ability. The distinction between the strong and weak speakers springs from the style of delivery, rather than years of study or study abroad. This surprises students. Those with little linguistic ability are pleased to learn that they can compete with uperclassmen. Seniors returning from a year abroad realize that they cannot rest on their laurels. The addition of these skills only complements advanced language training, and it is hoped that the combination will yield students whom we can place without reservation in the international workforce.

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TEACHING GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY FOR PROFICIENCY

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The word "proficiency" has indeed become the buzzword of the 1980's in the profession. Journals feature article after article about theories dealing with acquisition of proficiency, while conferences offer various kinds of workshops dealing with strategies for teaching toward proficiency outcomes. While the concept of proficiency is no longer a novel one for most language educators, the profession is still searching for clearer implications to bridge the idea behind proficiency-based instruction with actual classroom techniques for teaching grammar and vocabulary.

Adoption of proficiency-based principles in one's teaching does not mean utilizing a new method of instruction. In simple terms, it means providing maximum opportunities for students to perform communicative linguistic tasks in a variety of contexts and with a given degree of accuracy, depending on the linguistic level of the class (Omaggio, 1986). Many implications for the learning/teaching processes are to be gleaned from this definition of proficiency.

(1) Students need to internalize vocabulary in order to understand and access it effectively. The word "internalize" here means the ability to associate directly an object or abstraction with the target language equivalent without the need to utilize the native language. We as teachers have for ages been frustrated with students, who seem to "know" the vocabulary for the test or immediate task and then promptly forget it by the next lesson. We find ourselves spending endless amounts of time teaching and reteaching the same vocabulary, but failing to see better results. A very successful technique for enabling students to internalize large amounts of vocabulary quickly and to retain it is the Total Physical Response strategy or an adaptation thereof. Through this technique, students develop listening comprehension skills by interacting with the environment in a physical manner, thus linking language and context (Asher, 1972). This interaction can range from responding to commands to passing around objects to arranging pictures in order, making them correspond to a story being told. The validity of TPR is supported by a wealth of experimentation, which also has indicated that it can be used as a basis for teaching all four skills (Palmer and Palmer, 1970; Asher and Price, 1967; Asher, Kusado, and de la Torre, 1974; Glisan, 1986).

(2) Students need to develop personalized vocabulary in order to talk about their own worlds. Since it would be impossible for any text to present all vocabulary which every student needs to describe his or her own world, we as teachers should be willing to fill in the gaps. Students may need other words for sports--white water rafting, body building, fencing--or even for family kinship terms--stepmother, adopted sister, half brother--which may not be included in the vocabulary presentation. Sometimes we find it time consuming to give extra words to students during a class period. One strategy which saves time is to have students hand in a list of words which they need in order to fulfill a given linguistic task, be it describing family or talking about leisure-time activities. This activity works well if done the day before the vocabulary unit is presented so that the teacher can include any extra words in the presentation. The entire class does not need to be held accountable for any "extra words" since they pertain to the needs and interests of individual students. The students requesting the supplemental vocabulary will remember the words well because they are important to them in their individual contexts.

(3) Grammar can be more effectively taught as a means for communication if it is integrated with functions and contexts. Knowledge of grammatical rules in and of themselves does not enable the student to use them productively for communication unless grammar and real communication have been bridged. Grammar points, therefore, need to be tied to the linguistic functions, or tasks, which we perform and to the various contexts in which the tasks are carried out. For example, present tense should be practiced so that students will be able to describe themselves, their families, interests, school- or work-related issues, as well as to ask questions. These functions, among many others, may occur in contexts such as school, work, shopping, public transportation, to name only a few. The proof of whether or not students have mastered a grammatical structure should be in their ability to use it for a communicative purpose, and not exclusively for doing mechnical drills or paper-and-pencil analyses. Further, utilizing grammar in this way serves as a motivational tool for students, who feel a sense of accomplishment by being able to communicate with others.

(4) Students will gain better control over structures and will retain them longer if they practice with small chunks

of grammar. We have for decades felt the need to attempt to teach "all" of the grammar of the target language with every rule and exception and exception to the exception. First-year textbooks have traditionally presented the entire grammar in very large chunks, such as one lesson on the "preterite and imperfect" or the "present subjunctive". The fact that students seldom internalized these structures is evident by the reality that we had to reteach these same structures in the third semester or year. Indeed many instructors have for this reason come to dread the third level! If we truly want students to develop proficiency, then we must provide maximum time for them to practice using the grammar in communicative contexts. We cannot expect students to internalize the subjunctive mood and be able to utilize it if they have twenty-seven rules thrown at them at once. Meaningful learning means building upon the presently existing schemata, or memory structures, and adding new material step by step. Students will understand and be able to use new structures if they are presented in smaller "chunks," thus providing less of a need for extensive grammatical analysis and more time for communicative practice. The structure, "subjunctive mood," for example, can be presented in chunks such as giving advice and suggestions, expressing doubt, expressing emotion, expressing wanting and wishing, among others. Another way to present small chunks of grammar is to present only two or three persons of each verb tense at a time so that students have ample time to practice with each. Memorizing verb forms in traditional paradigms usually means that students have to repeat all five forms before they can access the third person plural form! Another strategy for minimizing the grammar scope is to present certain structures as lexical items which are learned as vocabulary. This is especially useful for expressions of high frequency, such as in Spanish: *me gusta* (I like); *quisiera*/*me gustaría* (I would like). While these structures are quite complex linguistically, they need to be presented early on since they are so common in many different functions and contexts. Students learn them initially as lexical items and later on analyze their structures.

(5) An effective way to select grammar for presentation in the classroom is to examine the frequency of structures in authentic discourse. We like to think that the structures which we present and teach are those which native speakers utilize in their communication. However, many of the traditionally taught grammar points are of very low frequency in speech and, sometimes, of higher frequency in reading. For example, accordingly to Moreno de Alba, the future tense has a 0.8% frequency of occurrence in spoken Spanish (1978, p. 101); William Bull has found it to be over three times more frequent in written sources (1947, pp. 451-66). Another finding in Spanish is that two-thirds of the uses of the familiar imperative are actually attention-getting clichés, such as *mira* (look), *oye* (listen), and *fíjate* (notice) (de Alba, 1978, p. 116). In addition, the research presently being done by the author of this paper has shown that a structure such as the use of double object pronouns is far more frequent in reading that it is in speaking. The results of these types of research should give us the basis for excluding those structures of very low frequency and for teaching certain structures for recognition in reading, where their use may be more frequent. This step will in turn give us more time for practice of the important grammatical structures and vocabulary.

(6) Students need maximum opportunities to utilize grammar and vocabulary in communicative tasks and situations. Narrowing the scope of grammar and presenting grammar in smaller chunks will enable us to have more time for communicative work. Communicative practice means providing opportunities for students to share their own ideas and information about their own worlds with each other. Such practice helps students to "acquire" language, i.e., internalize it subconsciously by using critical thinking skills and being motivated to learn. While the ideal way to acquire language is to live in the target language culture, communicative practice is one way to create an acquisition-rich environment in the classroom. This means that the teacher often has to step aside and encourage students to talk and to ask questions. It also means that the teacher should, during communicative activities, avoid interrupting to correct grammar errors, so as not to stop the student's train of thought and to avoid causing frustration. During more structured, precommunicative practice, error correction is often more overt since the focus is on learning a new structure. However, during communicative activities, where the focus is on encouraging students to communicate, the teacher can effectively handle error correction by noting problems during the activity, discussing them afterward, and if necessary, returning to more structured practice in order to overcome difficulties.

(7) Opportunities for developing thinking skills and communication can be maximized by utilizing pair and group work techniques. Because we are often faced with classes of twenty-five to thirty students, it is difficult to provide sufficient practice for each and every student. We can, however, maximum the time spent in communication by conducting pair and group activities. These techniques enable students to perform tasks such as interviewing each other, debating, taking surveys/polls, solving problems, enacting role plays/situations, creating stories/dialogs, and playing games. Since using a language means interacting with others, we want to enable students to communicate with their classmates, and not just with the teacher. In order for these activities to be successful and conducted with the least amount of chaos, the following guidelines should be kept in mind: (a) The task should be clear and simple; (b) Students must know the grammar and vocabulary necessary for carrying out the task; (c) Students should be grouped or paired so that stronger students can help the weaker students; (d) A limited amount of time should be given for the activity so that students do not get bored; (e) The teacher should check on each group's work during the activity in order to answer questions and check on progress; and (f) Students must be made responsible for the activity by being asked to report to the entire class afterward or doing a writing assignment on the activity for homework; for example, writing a paragraph describing the results of the interview. Students will enjoy the variety of class activities as well as the opportunity to share their thoughts with their classmates.

(8) In beginning language instruction, students internalize grammar and vocabulary more quickly and easily if exposed to oral input prior to seeing written language. If students are told to close their books and to listen to the teacher, they pay closer attention to the oral input since they are unable to rely upon the written word. This encourages them to use inductive reasoning and to try to recognize the pattern of the grammatical structures being presented. The more students are actively involved in inductively understanding structures and meaning, the more effectively they will understand and retain information. Furthermore, students will develop better pronunciation skills if they imitate the teacher's model and do not have interference from trying to attach sound to the written letters before having heard the correct pronunciation. Without the crutch of the textbook, students must pay closer attention, are more challenged to do activities, and receive immediate feedback of their level of mastery of a given structure.

(9) From the beginning of language instruction, students should be taught strategies for listening and reading. We hope that after students leave our classes they are motivated to pick up a newspaper in the target language or listen to a radio broadcast. However, in order for students to feel competent to do this, they need to develop strategies for understanding oral and written input. In the classroom, we can first familiarize students with the strategies which they use in English in comprehending, and second, teach them how to use similar strategies in comprehending the target language. Examples of listening and reading comprehension strategies which can be practiced include listening/reading for main ideas or for specific information, identifying main vocabulary words as clues for meaning, guessing meaning by using context, and utilizing background knowledge to anticipate meaning.

(10) **Students need exposure to authentic listening and reading materials in order to understand how language is utilized in real contexts.** If students are to learn to use real language, they need to listen to authentic materials such as news broadcasts, announcements, and talk shows, and to read authentic texts such as newspaper and magazine articles and literature. As discussed above, students need strategies for coping with the unknown language which they may encounter; further, they need to be discouraged from translating word for word in a blind effort to understand everything in a text. Authentic materials can be presented as early as level one provided that the teacher structures the reading or listening task at the level of the students' abilities; examples of such tasks are skimming/listening for the main idea, scanning/listening for specific details, or identifying words as clues to meaning. Students' ability to handle authentic materials can be greatly improved by including a pre-listening or pre-reading activity through which students activate their existing background knowledge to prepare them for the content of the text (Phillips, 1984). The same written or oral text presented early on in level one can be presented again at a later point or at a higher level so that students can perform higher level tasks with it.

In summary, the following are the important elements of teaching grammar and vocabulary for proficiency-based outcomes:

1. Internalization of vocabulary
2. Personalization of vocabulary
3. Listening before speaking
4. Practice of grammar orally before reading/analyzing structures
5. Limited scope of grammar
6. Active use = C3
    Closed books
    Communication
    Creativity
7. Practice of all four skills
8. Authentic listening and reading materials--development of strategies

The following is a sample vocabulary lesson in French which incorporates the principles previously discussed:

PERSONALIZING VOCABULARY - NOVICE LEVEL
Vocabulary Unit: Sports

I. **Internalization Stage:** Teacher presents vocabulary using pictures and teacher talk in French:

nager
danser
patiner
faire du ski
faire du football
faire de la culture physique
faire du camping
faire du cyclisme
faire du hockey (sur glace)
faire du ski nautique
faire du jogging
faire du tennis
faire du basketball

Students internalize new vocabulary by means of a Total Physical Response (TPR) activity in which they act out the sports mentioned and identify pictures. They also match sports to pictures of sport-related items such as a tennis racket, ice skates, swimming pool, bicycle, etc.

II. **Listening Stage:** Students listen to a brief sports announcement or conversation and identify the sports mentioned.

III. **Communication Stage:** Students use the new vocabulary to communicate with each other:

Which sports would you play in each season?
--En hiver,....
--En automne,....
--En printemps,....
--En été,....

In each of the following circumstances, which sport(s) would you play?
--Vous cherchez a faire du sport en équipe.
--Vous avez peu d'argent.
--Il pleut.
--Vous aimez sortir le dimanche.

--Vous désirez passer du temps sur l'eau.
--Il fait beau.

IV. **Personalization Stage:** Teacher first gives any additional vocabulary to students who are interested in other sports which were not presented. Then students discuss their own preferences:

With what frequency do you practice the sports listed above?
souvent quelquefois rarement pas du tout

Which are your favorite sports?
Which sport would you most like to learn?
Which sport do you most prefer to do alone?
Which sport do you most prefer to do with others?

Students interview other:

INTERVIEW SHEET

Interviewer________________ Interviewee______________

	Souvent	Quelquefois	Rarement	Pas du tout
1. Nager				
2. Danser				
3. Patiner				
4. Faire du ski				
5. Faire du tennis				
6. Faire du hockey (sur glace)				
7. Faire du cyclisme				
-etc.-				

+ = favorite sport
* = would like to learn
- = afraid to learn

VI. **Reading:** Students read an authentic reading from the sports pages in order to identify the familiar sports and/or use the context to guess the meaning of unfamiliar sports.

VII. **Writing:** Students write up the results of the oral interviews which they did in class (Part IV. above).

***Recycling:**

With practice of past/future time

To review numbers (scores, statistics)

With discussion of health-related matters

To point out cultural differences

With expression of opinion, doubt, hypothesis (professional sports players and their salaries, college sports and academics, sports players and use of drugs/steroids, the Olympic games, the competitiveness of sports for children, etc.)

To elicit discussions/debates/role plays dealing with the themes above

SOURCE: Journal Francais d'Amérique, Vol. 10, No. 19,
23 Septembre - 6 Octobre 1988, p. 13.

Les Français pratiquent de plus en plus le sport

Les athlètes français ne rapporteront peut-être pas beaucoup de médailles lors des Jeux Olympiques de Séoul mais les 55 millions de Français pratiquent de plus en plus, une activité sportive.

Un Français sur cinq pratique actuellement un sport dans le cadre d'une association sportive ou fédération. Mais c'est surtout la pratique du sport au niveau individuel qui a progressé — près d'une semaine en durée annuelle moyenne contre seulement 20 minutes en 1975.

Cet engouement pour le sport a entraîné le développement d'une industrie qui réalise un chiffre d'affaires annuel d'environ 10 milliards de francs, soit 1 % de l'ensemble des industries françaises.

Le 37e SISEL (Salon international du sport et des équipements de loisirs), qui s'est tenu du 4 au 7 septembre à Paris-Le Bourget, a permis de constater ce développement de la pratique sportive dans une nation pourtant réputée rétive à l'effort physique.

C'est principalement grâce aux femmes que la pratique sportive se répand : la progression a été de l'ordre de 44 % entre 1978 et 1986 chez les femmes contre seulement 28 % chez les hommes.

Mais les hommes demeurent plus sportifs que les femmes : 22,7 % d'hommes adhèrent à une association sportive contre 13,2 % de femmes et 60,6 % d'hommes (pour 39,4 % de femmes) pratiquent au moins une activité sportive.

Vive la gymnastique et le football

Durant les vacances, autant d'hommes que de femmes font du ski alpin ou du vélo. En revanche, les femmes nagent et marchent plus que lés hommes. Les hommes sont plus nombreux à jouer au tennis durant les vacances : 20,12 % d'entre eux pour 12,87 % des femmes.

Le reste de l'année, les hommes et les femmes font de la marche, mais moins que durant les vacances. L'activité la plus pratiquée par les femmes durant l'année est la gymnastique et 12 % des Françaises s'adonnent à cette discipline. Elles sont 10 fois plus nombreuses que les hommes à choisir cette activité.

Quant aux hommes, ils choisissent de préférence une activité spécifiquement masculine : le football. Près de 12 % des Français jouent au football.

The following is a sample grammar lesson in Spanish which incorporates the principles previously discussed:

TEACHING GRAMMAR FOR PROFICIENCY

Grammar Point: Subjunctive Mood
Lesson Focus: Subjunctive with querer, aconsejar recomendar, es necesario + que
Function (Meaning): Giving Advice and Suggestions

A. Grammatical Presentation:

Teacher gives students a list of 8 suggestions for good study habits. Students have a series of drawings which they match to the sentences in order to practice understanding content:

1. Recomiendo que Uds. hablen en español.
2. Recomiendo que Uds. escuchen las cintas.
3. Recomiendo que Uds. practiquen el vocabulario.
4. Recomiendo que Uds. lean los libros.
5. Recomiendo que Uds. escriban los ejercicios.
6. Recomiendo que Uds. duerman ocho horas cada noche.
7. Recomiendo que Uds. vayan al laboratorio de lenguas.
8. Recomiendo que Uds. se acuesten temprano.

Students and teacher generate a list of the 8 activities in present indicative and put them on the board (hablan, escuchan, etc.). Teacher reads the 8 recommendations again and elicits from students the difference in verb forms between the present indicative and the new form used with advice and suggestions. Students should recognize that they are hearing the "opposite" ending. Teacher asks students what the sign "n" at the end of the verb always indicates; they know from practice with the present that it signals third person plural. Teacher points out that students need to produce the first person singular present indicative before changing the ending. Only the third person singular and plural forms are presented in this lesson.

B. Listening:

Students listen to taped conversations in which people are giving each other advice (parent to child, teacher to student, doctor to patient). They identify each piece of advice being given.

C. Speaking Practice with Focus on Form:

Teacher tells students that they are going to practice giving recommendations to the teacher (Recomiendo que Ud...). First -*ar* verbs are practiced, followed by -*er*/-*ir* verbs. Recomiendo que Ud..... (mirar la televisión, escuchar música, tomar el sol, descansar, jugar al tenis, dar buenas notas, comer tacos, ir de vacaciones, etc.). Students practice producing the forms without seeing the written verbs in order to focus on how they sound. Teacher helps with verb formation as needed. After the exercise, students copy verb forms into their notebooks for reinforcement; teacher adds two irregular verbs, *sea* and *haga*.

D. Written Exercises:

Students complete several exercises in text in which they practice using *querer*, *aconsejar*, and *es necesario* with advice. The exercises include matching and completion.

E. Creative Use/Personalization:

Students take turns giving each other advice or recommendations for things they would like their classmates to do or not to do. They can also do the same activity using parents or teacher as the persons being given advice.

F. Reading:

Students read a short dialog or story and identify the types of advice being given.

G. Homework Assignment: Writing: "Suggestion Box"

As one part of a homework assignment, students write a list of 5 suggestions or recommendations for the school principal or university president to be put into an imaginary suggestion box.

Follow-up Work:

Practice talking about advice which other people give (changing the subject in first clause to persons other than I: ex., *My parents* want me to....). Additional listening and reading of authentic materials to identify suggestions and discuss them. Writing school advice column.

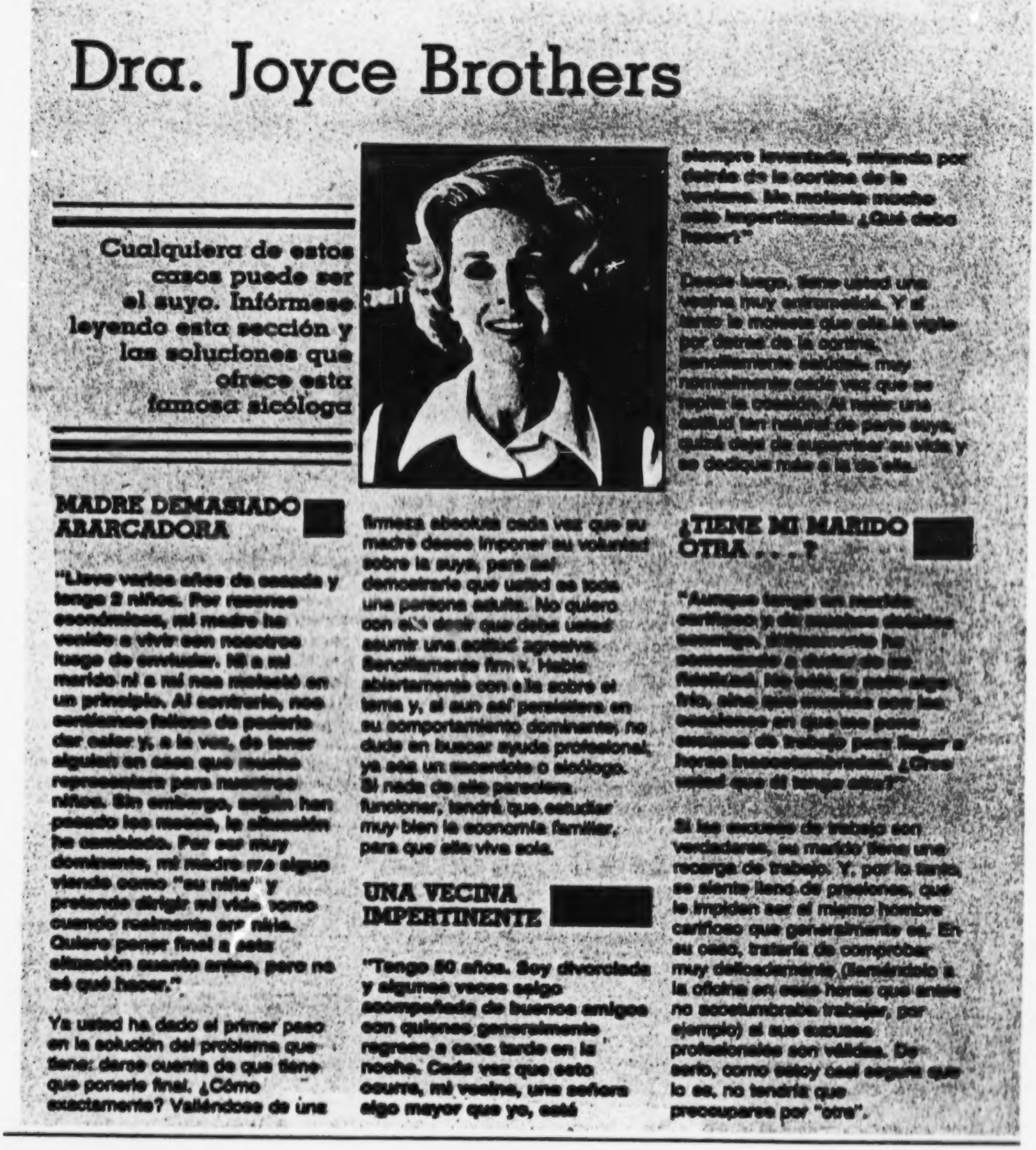
Recycling at Higher Levels:
With practice in giving advice for health-related matters (smoking, drinking, exercise, eating properly, sleeping, etc.)

To practice giving "hypothetical" advice (to the President, candidates, university officials, etc.)

To practice expressing advice and recommendations in the past (with past subjunctive)

To express opinions and debate (current events, moral issues)

SOURCE: Buenhogar, Año 21, No. 9, 23 abril 1986.



Dra. Joyce Brothers

Cualquiera de estos casos puede ser el suyo. Infórmese leyendo esta sección y las soluciones que ofrece esta famosa sicóloga

MADRE DEMASIADO ABARCADORA

"Llevo varios años de casada y tengo 2 niños. Por razones económicas, mi madre ha venido a vivir con nosotros luego de enviudar. Ni a mi marido ni a mí nos molestó en un principio. Al contrario, nos sentíamos felices de poderle dar calor y, a la vez, de tener alguien en casa que [illegible] representara para nuestros niños. Sin embargo, según han pasado los meses, la situación ha cambiado. Por ser muy dominante, mi madre me sigue viendo como "su niña" y pretende dirigir mi vida como cuando realmente era niña. Quiero poner final a esta situación cuanto antes, pero no sé qué hacer."

Ya usted ha dado el primer paso en la solución del problema que tiene: darse cuenta de que tiene que ponerle final. ¿Cómo exactamente? Valiéndose de una firmeza absoluta cada vez que su madre desee imponer su voluntad sobre la suya, para así demostrarle que usted es toda una persona adulta. No quiero con ello decir que deba usted asumir una actitud agresiva. Sencillamente firme. Hable abiertamente con ella sobre el tema y, si aun así persistiera en su comportamiento dominante, no dude en buscar ayuda profesional, ya sea un sacerdote o sicólogo. Si nada de ello pareciera funcionar, tendrá que estudiar muy bien la economía familiar, para que ella viva sola.

UNA VECINA IMPERTINENTE

"Tengo 50 años. Soy divorciada y algunas veces salgo acompañada de buenos amigos con quienes generalmente regreso a casa tarde en la noche. Cada vez que esto ocurre, mi vecina, una señora algo mayor que yo, está siempre levantada, mirando por detrás de la cortina de la ventana. Me molesta mucho esta impertinencia. ¿Qué debo hacer?"

Desde luego, tiene usted una vecina muy entrometida. Y si tanto le molesta que ella la vigile por detrás de la cortina, sencillamente salúdela muy normalmente cada vez que se repita la ocasión. Al tomar una actitud tan natural de parte suya, quizá deje de supervisar su vida y se dedique más a la de ella.

¿TIENE MI MARIDO OTRA . . . ?

"Aunque tengo un marido cariñoso y de muchos detalles conmigo, últimamente he comenzado a dudar de su fidelidad. No es que lo note algo frío, sino que muchas son las ocasiones en que me pone excusas de trabajo para llegar a horas inacostumbradas. ¿Cree usted que él tenga otra?"

Si las excusas de trabajo son verdaderas, su marido tiene una recarga de trabajo. Y, por lo tanto, se siente lleno de presiones, que le impiden ser el mismo hombre cariñoso que generalmente es. En su caso, trataría de comprobar muy delicadamente (llamándolo a la oficina en esas horas que antes no acostumbraba trabajar, por ejemplo) si sus excusas profesionales son válidas. De serlo, como estoy casi segura que lo es, no tendría que preocuparse por "otra".

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